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ABSTRACT

Focusing on instruction in the English language arts by students for whom English is a second language, this yearbook contains the papers from the precongress institute, "Reading English in Asia," of the tenth International Reading Association World Congress on Reading--held in Hong Kong in 1984. Part 1 contains "Linguistic Theories and L2 Reading," by Byong Won Kim, which discusses L2 reading as a language process, L2 reading approaches and linguistic notions, the reality of linguistic notions, and the developmental aspects of English as a second language (ESL) textual knowledge. Part 2 contains "Effects of Prior knowledge on ESL Reading," by Safia Osman; "Reading Acquisition in Singapore," by Seok M. Ng; "Assessment of the Cloze Reading Technique in Placement Testing," by Siriporn Limtrakarn; and "Contextual Reading," by Young Ja Lee. Part 3 contains "Reading-Based Intensive Course in English for Foreign Students," by Lourdes M. Dias; "An Analysis of the Cultural Influences in the Grammar of the English Short Stories and Poems of the Palanca Awards First Prize Winners 1965-1970," by Patria G. Aranas; and "A Comparison of Study Skill Attitudes of Asian and American Students," by Carmen J. Carsello. The bylaws of Literacy and Languages in Asia are included. (EL)

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# READING ENGLISH IN ASIA

*The First Yearbook of*
*Literacy and Languages in Asia,*
*International Reading Association*
*Special Interest Group*

*Edited by*
Byong Won Kim

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## *PREFACE*

As the founder and international coordinator of Literacy and Languages in Asia (LLA), and as the organizer of an LLA institute, I had written a special letter in September, 1983, to each of the eleven speakers on the institute program on "Reading English in Asia." The pre-congress institute was organized for the tenth International Reading Association World Congress on Reading in Hong Kong, July 30—August 2, 1984. In the letter, I had encouraged each of the speakers to prepare a fully developed paper ready for publication, in addition to the paper for the 20 minute oral presentation at the institute. This yearbook is the collection of the fully developed papers submitted in time for their publication.

As the editor of the first LLA yearbook, I would like to express my gratitude to the contributors from Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and the United States. I also express my thanks to Prof. Thomas R. Lopez (The University of Toledo, Ohio, U.S.A.), a visiting professor at Hanyang University, 1984-85, who assisted me with the editorial task.

Finally, LLA and I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Hanyang University for the financial support without which the yearbook could not have been published.

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# PART ONE

Chapter I

# *Linguistic Theories and L2 Reading*

BYONG WON KIM

## *Introduction*

### *L2 reading as a language process*

Reading is basically a language process. Language is the medium the reader principally relies on for his active formation of ideas, which we often refer to as "meanings," represented in the reading material.

In defining reading as a language process, we take it for granted that non-linguistic factors are also involved in reading; for example, the reader's knowledge of the world, power of inference, memory, and reading strategies. These non-linguistic factors sometimes enhance and sometimes hinder the reading process. However, we can hardly imagine a reader with no knowledge of the language used for the construction of the reading material. No reading process can be properly conceptualized without accepting the reader's linguistic knowledge as the major factor.

The linguistic factor assumes a decisive role in determining good or poor performance in reading a second/foreign language (L2). Not all L2 readers, of course, have a good command of the target language when they begin to read. Accordingly, an L2 reader's immature knowledge of the language becomes a major problem that limits the growth of his reading power. Since reading is basically a language process, no other factor appears more significant in determining good or poor in L2 reading than the reader's knowledge of the target language.

In reading one's native language (L1), by contrast, non-linguistic factors seem to be more important than linguistic factors in determining good or poor performance. For example, the reader's background knowledge and reading strategies appear to assume a decisive role in L1 reading comprehension (Anderson, 1977a, 1977b; Canney & Winograd, 1979). This does not defy, however, the definition of reading as a language process. In contrast with L2 readers, nearly all L1 readers have mature linguistic knowledge when they begin to read. Thus, the reader's linguistic knowledge assumes a minor role in good-poor distinction. Accordingly,

linguistic knowledge moves into the background, even though it is the major factor in reading, while non-linguistic factors move into the foreground.

*Purpose*

Based on the premise that reading is a language process, legitimacy of L2 reading approaches can be evaluated in terms of the legitimacy of the linguistic notions employed for the conceptualization of language in the approaches.

One major approach to L2 reading was proposed by Fries (1967). He defined language as patterns of vocal sounds, i.e., speech, and reading as an observable behavior of sounding out the graphic representations of the speech. The focus was on the visual operation of sounding out the written/printed words. Fries relied on linguistic notions provided by the structuralist theory for the formation of his reading approach.

Goodman (1971) took a different way in forming his L2 reading approach. He defined language as universal deep structure, and reading as a continuous interplay between the deep linguistic structure and its surface structure. The focus was on the unobservable psycholinguistic processes that relate the abstract linguistic structure in the reader's brain and the written words (and their sounds) which are referred to as surface structure. Goodman relied on the transformational generative grammar for the conceptualization of language.

In this paper, the linguistic notions provided by the two traditional linguistics are critically reviewed as unrealistic, and the two well-established L2 reading approaches (Fries, 1967; Goodman, 1971) are, therefore, recognized as unrealistic. Alternative notions adopted from Fillmore (1968, 1982), Chafe (1970, 1972, 1982), Halliday & Hasan (1976), Shuy (1981) and others are recognized as less unrealistic than those.

Indeed, the purpose of this paper is to establish legitimacy of the alternative linguistic notions by showing that they are empirically realistic. Certain notions about relations between spoken and written language and about the unit of meaning and language constitute the core of a language theory and differentiate it from another theory. These notions provide a theoretical framework for the development of L2 reading approaches. The following two questions are raised, therefore, to critically review the two well-established L2 reading approaches and to propose a realistic one.

(1) Is written language identical or unidentical with spoken language?

(2) Is the unit of meaning and language a sentence or a "text"?

*Organization of the paper*

The introductory section is followed by a review of major L2 reading approaches and their linguistic background. Fries and Goodman are treated as representatives of two well-established approaches organized within the framework provided by structuralist and transformationalist theories of language. A third approach based on linguistic notions mainly derived from Chafe (1970, 1972, 1982) is proposed as the one that appears more realistic than the two approaches.

The review section is followed by an examination of some naturalistic data, i.e., draw-tell monologues and reading-retellings produced by one of my children who were immersed in an English speaking environment as beginners of English as a second language (ESL). The data reveal evidence that supports legitimacy of the realistic linguistic notions about the relationship between spoken and written language, and about the appropriate unit of meaning and language.

Next, an exploratory study of ESL text comprehension and construction is reported to exemplify a third approach to L2 reading based on two realistic linguistic notions: definition of written language as different from spoken language and definition of *text* including connected discourse as the appropriate unit of meaning and language. The study examined some developmental aspects of textual knowledge; to be specific, use of textual devices such as verb-tense forms, conjunctions, and nouns-pronouns. The data were collected from three of my children. A small portion of one child's reading-retelling was earlier used in the review section. The study had been orally reported by me at the fourth annual conference of the American Association for Applied Linguistics held in the City of New York, December 28, 1981.

Finally, some instructional and research implications are offered in the conclusion.

*Exclusion of non-linguistic approaches*

Non-linguistic or cognitive approaches are also availabe in L2 reading field. A background knowledge approach, for example, is becoming a major trend. These cognitive approaches are excluded from the review in this paper because this paper is limited to linguistic approaches. A background knowledge approach is briefly discussed here, nevertheless, to indicate pro-

blems revealed in such a non-linguistic approach. Osman, in this volume, is recommended for an observation of some positive aspects of a background knowledge approach.

Background knowledge researchers like Anderson (1977a, 1977b), Steffensen & Joag-dev (1981) and Johnson (1981) in L2 reading maintain that reading performance is a function of background knowledge the reader has and that if the reader has the knowledge assumed by the writer of the reading material, reading comprehension is facilitated (Steffensen & Joag-dev, 1981).

The focus is placed on the reader's background knowledge in reading. For example, Steffensen, Joag-dev, & Anderson (1979) used English speaking subjects (*Ss*) from the U.S. and ESL speakers from India to find out the effects of the *Ss*' cultural knowledge on their reading on an American and an Indian wedding. The *Ss* recalled a larger amount of information from the native passage, produced more culturally appropriate elaborations of the native passage, and produced more culturally based distortions of the foreign passage. The results indicated certain influence of the reader's background knowledge of the world on the comprehension and recall processes.

In such studies, however, linguistic knowledge of L2 *Ss* is not treated as one of the major factors. For example, in Steffensen, Joag-dev, & Anderson (1979) 19 Indian *Ss* and 20 American *Ss* were matched in terms of sex, age, highest year of education completed, area of academic specialization, and marital status. The language used in the two reading materials was English; yet, the Indian *Ss*' knowledge of English as a non-native language was not controlled or measured for its consideration in the analysis of the data. It can be inferred from the *Ss*' reading speeds that probably the differences in speed may have been caused by the *Ss*' immature knowledge of the target language. In fact, American *Ss* read the two materials at the average rate of 168 and 213 seconds respectively, while Indian *Ss* read them at the average rate of 276 and 304 seconds respectively (Steffensen & Joag-dev, 1981). These obvious differences in reading speed, we may suspect, must have influenced their reading comprehension processes.

## *L2 Reading Approaches and Linguistic Notions*

### *Fries and structuralist notions*

**Structuralist notions.** Charles C. Fries' (1945, 1967) L2 reading approach can be characterized by two linguistic notions about the relationship between spoken and written language and about the appropriate unit of meaning and language. First, the speech was assumed to be the language. The script was a system of the graphic representations of the speech. Accordingly, reading was to him merely an observable behavior of sounding out the graphic representations of the speech. Second, the sentence was the appropriate unit of meaning and language. Words and morphemes were parts of speech that could not be always properly understood out of the sentential structure. Each sentence was to be better understood in terms of its accumulated meaning within the given context; however, the sentence was defined as the linguistic unit.

Fries was one of the leaders of structural grammarians. The two notions were the main points he made in his criticism of the "school grammar". The school grammars had been composed of essentially word-centered prescriptive rules based on the written language. Criticizing these, Fries proposed two revolutionary notions of the primacy of the speech over the written language and the sentence as the linguistic unit in *The structure of English* (Fries, 1952), the key document of structural grammar, and in *Linguistics and reading* (Fries, 1962), one of the most influential linguistic theories of reading.

**Speech vs. script.** Defining the speech as the language, Fries organized *The structure of English* to present "an analysis of a large body of actual English speech observed and recorded in a university community" to show "how certain native speakers actually do use it in natural, practical conversations" (Fries, 1952, 3). To him, "the written record is but a secondary representation of the language" (Fries, 1945, 6). For reading English as a second language, accordingly, he emphasized three things. First, one must master the fundamentals of English as a set of habits for oral production and reception before any attempt to read English meaningfully (Fries, 1945, 6). Second, one must master the English writing system (Fries, 1967, 99). Third, one must master expressive oral reading before any attempt to read new materials silently (Fries, 1967, 102-3).

**The unit.** In his *Linguistics and reading*, Fries (1962, 111-2) proposed three different "layers" of meanings: lexical, linguistic or grammatical, and social-cultural meaning. Lexical meanings are the meanings carried by the

lexical items. These are, however, not the meanings that account for human communication in essence. The sentential meanings are the real meanings that we communicate because language is sentence-centered. The sentential meanings are carried by the grammatical structures. The grammatical structures consist of (1) form-class markers of content words, (2) function words, and (3) patterns of intonation (Fries, 1962, 105-111). Lexical items without the grammatical structures usually lack of the linguistic meanings which enable speakers to communicate effectively.

The sentence is in this sense the proper unit of language. Structural grammarians, in fact, generally accept the sentence as the linguistic unit as follows.

> "Each sentence is an independent linguistic form, not included by virtue of any grammatical construction in any larger linguistic form" (Fries, 1952, 21).

The third layers of meanings, according to Fries, is the social-cultural meanings, or the "cumulative meanings of sequences of sentences in a discourse" (Fries, 1962, 109; 1967, 103). The layers of lexical and grammatical meanings constitute only part of the meanings conveyed by sequences of sentences that form a discourse. The total meaning of a discourse consists of the meanings of lexical items and grammatical units, plus the social-cultural meanings, i.e., the situational contexts and cultural knowledge the speakers share at the moment they communicate. Fries believes that in L2 reading the situational contexts and cultural knowledge "must be *supplied* by the reader if he is to do the "productive reading" of adequately complete comprehension" (Fries, 1967, 103).

The notion of the social-cultural meanings is virtually identical with the notion of the "cultural background knowledge" proposed by some schema-oriented researchers (Anderson, 1977a, 1977b; Canney & Winograd, 1979; Steffensen, Joag-dev, & Anderson, 1979; Johnson, 1981), which was briefly discussed earlier. The role of this non-linguistic factor in reading comprehension must be recognized. However, Fries and contemporary schema-oriented researchers do not mean to admit a linguistic unit larger than the sentence by dealing with sequences of sentences in a discourse. They simply help us to sense that speakers and readers use social-cultural meanings based on their background knowledge.

Fries' notions can be summarized as follows. (1) The speech is the language, and reading is no more than using script for expressive sounding out. (2) The sentence is the unit of the meaning and language. These

notions constitute the core of the structural grammar. Fries, a leading structural linguist, applied these linguistic notions to L1 and L2 reading when he found that various method-approaches based on psychological-educational notions had failed to teach reading effectively despite of the four century-long struggle among the method-approaches (Fries, 1970, 149).

*Goodman and transformationalist notions*

**Goodman vs. Fries.** K. Goodman's L2 reading approach (Goodman, 1971) on the one hand, is different from Fries' in that Goodman accepts the notion of linguistic knowledge of deep structure, or competence, which realizes itself into language performances, spoken and written. This implies that reading is parallel with listening which relies on abstract linguistic knowledge of deep structure for comprehension. On the other hand, Goodman and Fries alike accept the sentence as the grammatical unit of meaning and language. Apart from these comparisons, Goodman differs from Fries in that Goodman proposed the notion of a psycholinguistic process and a single reading process. Goodman invented the "miscue analysis" method to collect evidence that reading is a psycholinguistic process and that there is a single reading process which underlies L1 and L2 reading at all stages of development.

We will discuss the parallelism between listening and reading and the definition of reading as a single psycholinguistic process. The definition of the sentence as the linguistic unit was already discussed at length. Therefore, it will not be repeated in this section.

**Transformationalist notions.** Goodman (1971, 1976), criticizing the common mistake of dismissing written language as a secondary representation of speech (e.g., Fries, 1945, 1962, 1967), proposed a notion of parallelism between spoken and written language. Listening and reading, in other words, are two different linguistic performances based on the language user's innate linguistic knowledge of deep structure. This notion is obviously from the generative transformational linguistics.

Goodman actually quoted part of Noam Chomsky's lecture on literacy delivered at Cornell University. Chomsky presented a model of speaker's sentence production and of listener's sentence interpretation from which Goodman analogically derived a model of recoding and decoding process in reading (Goodman, 1976, 501-3). The reader, according to Goodman, sounds out the script and at the same time actively guesses the meaning

of what he is reading relying on the linguistic knowledge of deep structure. In these recoding and decoding processes, comprehension is dependent on the reader's linguistic knowledge of deep structure, i.e., graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic knowledge. The sounding out of the script (i.e., oral reading) also depends on the same linguistic knowledge of deep structure. Therefore, oral reading appears to be by-product of reading comprehension process.

**Miscues.** Goodman (1969) accepts the transformationalist notion of pre-existence of universal linguistic knowledge of deep structure as *language* and reading as performance psychologically processed based on the *language*. Thus, he views reading comprehension as active constructive psycholinguistic process; i.e., a cycling of *sampling* graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic cues, *predicting* structures and meanings, *testing*, and *confirming* or *correcting*, all relying on the pre-existing linguistic knowledge of deep structure. Gooman and his colleagues assume that reading errors, or "miscues" in oral reading, made by a reader reveal certain characteristics of the reader's psycholinguistic processes. Specifically, "By comparing the ways these miscues differ from the expected responses we can get direct insights into how the reading process is functioning in a particular reader at a particular point in time" (Goodman, 1969, 12).

Two readers, A and B, for example, read a text orally which says, "The duck can get this." And let us suppose they made some errors in their reading, as follows.

| | |
|---|---|
| PRINTED TEXT : | The duck can get this. |
| READER A : | "*They* duck can get *the*." |
| READER B : | "*This* duck can get *it*." |

Reader A's errors, or miscues, *they* and *the* appear graphophonically closer to the printed words *the* and *this* than Reader B's *this* and *it*. Syntactically, however, Reader A's miscues *they* and *the* in "*They* duck can get *the*" change the sentence ungrammatical and it does not make sense. Since it was assumed earlier that oral reading is a by-product of active construction of meaning in reading, we can infer from Reader A's miscues that he was not comprehending the sentence appropriately. According to Goodman's approach, the reader's psycholinguistic process had some problem.

By contrast, Reader B's "*This* duck can get *it*," where *this* and *it* are different from the printed words *the* and *this*, makes sense and syntactically acceptable. These miscues evidently demonstrate that the reader's

psycholinguistic process was properly functioning. Reader B may be good at active construction of meaning at reading.

**Reading process.** Goodman (1971) proposed that "The reading process will be much the same for all languages" (140). Kenneth and Yetta Goodman (1978) conducted a study of "reading of American children whose language is a stable rural dialect of English or a language other than English" to test the notion of one single reading process. In the study, they analyzed miscues elicited by 96 second, fourth, and sixth grade ESL readers who spoke a language other than English as their native language before entering school. Their L1s were Navajo, Samoan, Arabic, and Spanish. Based on the results of the miscue analysis, the authors concluded that there is a single reading process which underlies all reading at all stages of development, suggesting that ESL readers need not be totally proficient in both productive and receptive English to learn to read English and get considerable meaning from their reading.

Goodman's premise that the reading process must be identical regardless of ESL readers' L1 background seems to have been based on Kolers' (1966) finding, other than the transformationalist linguistic notions, that different linguistic surface forms do not significantly interfere with comprehension processes. Kolers' finding is totally contradictory to the structuralist approach represented by Fries' approach.

In Kolers' (1966) study, *Ss*, French-English bilinguals, read similar passages in French only or in English only, i.e., unilingual passages. The *Ss* also read bilingual passages written with English and French sentences and phrases interchangeably mixed as in the following example:

> His horse, followed de deux bassets, faisait la terre resonner under its even tread.

In one part of the experiment, the *Ss* were tested for their understanding of the bilingual passages, compared to their understanding of unilingual passages in either of the languages. The results showed that even when the time they were allowed to read the passages was always the same, the *Ss* were able to understand the bilingual passages as well as they could understand the unilingual ones. The conclusion was that when a reader knows the words of a language, the reader comprehends them directly in terms of their meanings regardless of the differences of the language surface forms (Kolers, 1966).

The notion of one single reading process supported by Kolers (1966) and Goodman & Goodman (1978), however, is a generalization applicable

only to the reading of those who are equally proficient in both languages. Kolers (1966) stated his conclusion with a proviso, that a reader comprehends the words directly *when the reader knows the words of the language*. In other words, the notion of one single reading process cannot be applied to the L2 readers who have certain problems in their L2 linguistic knowledge. Goodman & Goodman (1978) claimed that their study demonstrated that ESL readers need not be totally proficient in English; however, they did not provide any documents that showed their *Ss*' level of ESL linguistic knowledge. According to their report, the *Ss*, who spoke their L1 before entering schools, had in fact spent at least one or two years exposed to ESL before they were used as *Ss* in Goodman & Goodman's study. This leads us to suspect the *Ss* used in the study must have had sufficiently developed linguistic knowledge. Therefore, we cannot safely apply the conclusions of the quoted studies to L2 or ESL readers who have not acquired sufficient linguistic knowledge for fluent reading.

The importance of linguistic knowledge of the target language in L2 reading needs to be emphasized because reading is basically a language process. Meaning is represented in written codes relying on the rules and patterns which are referred to as linguistic knowledge. Minimizing the role of linguistic knowledge in L2 reading studies may be misleading (Clarke, 1979; Cziko, 1980; Connor, 1981; Kim, 1981, 1983).

Clarke (1979), for example, conducted two studies to test Goodman's strong hypothesis of a single reading process. In his second study, Clarke found the minimization of the role of linguistic knowledge was not safe. Two *Ss*, whose ESL proficiency was comparable but one was a good L1 Spanish reader and the other was a poor L1 reader, read their L1 passage and English passage, following a reading-retelling procedure. The recorded data were analyzed by a reading miscue analysis taxanomy adapted for an ESL reading research. Generally, according to Goodman's single reading process, we expect that good readers produce more syntactically and semantically acceptable miscues than poor readers do. The results of Clarke's analysis, however, showed that in the L1 reading, the good reader produced 52% of syntactically acceptable miscues and 80% of semantically acceptable miscues, while the poor reader's miscues marked 52% and 64% in each category. On the other hand, in ESL reading, the good reader produced 54% of syntactically acceptable miscues and 46% of semantically acceptable miscues, in contrast to 52% and 80% in L1 reading. The poor reader's miscues in ESL reading marked 46% and 38% in each category.

The researcher interpreted the obvious decrease of semantically acceptable miscues in good and poor L1 reader's ESL reading, i.e., from 80% to 46% and from 64% to 38% respectively, as an indication of the role of language proficiency.

**Innate competence.** Pre-existence of lingustic knowledge of deep structure universally identical was an important assumption in Goodman's and also Kolers' notion of one single reading process. To illustrate, Reader B, in the example previously discussed, orally read: "*This* duck can get *it*." The two miscues, however different they are from the printed words *The* and *this* graphophonicaliy, help the syntax of the sentence remain the original NP + VP, i.e., "This duck" (*N*oun *P*hrase) + "get it" (*V*erb *P*hrase). Reader A's "*They* duck can get *the*", by contrast, does not map upon the NP + VP rule because "*They* and duck" potentially form two NPs, i.e., "*They*" (NP) and "duck" (NP). And *the* alone placed next to a verb as in "...get *the*" cannot map upon the rule VP → V + NP, because *the* (Article) has to be followed by a Noun to form an NP, and because there is no rule like VP → V + Art. These rules, S → NP + VP and VP → V + NP, which constitute part of the Readers' linguistic knowledge of deep structure are assumed by transformationalists to pre-exist in their head.

If the notion of pre-existence of linguistic knowledge of universal deep structure is not accepted as an assumption, Goodman's, and also Kolers', notion of one single reading process turns out groundless. On the other hand, Goodman's parallelism between listening and reading was based on the definition of the human knowledge of universal deep structure as the *language*. According to this definition, listening and reading are psychological performances of the pre-existing knowledge of universal deep structure. The rejection of pre-existence of deep structure, therefore, also turns out Goodman's parallelism groundless.

Is it realistic to assume the pre-existence of linguistic knowledge of universal deep structure in L2 readers? In the next section, immediately after we discuss a third approach to reading and summarize this section of L2 reading approaches and linguistic notions, we will examine some naturalistic data to see whether or not we can infer from the data the pre-existence of universal deep structure in a beginning reader of English as a non-native language.

*A third approach based on realistic notions*

A third approach to L2 reading may begin with rejection of any pre-

existing knowledge of universal deep structure in an L2 reader's head. Accepting the ideation theory (Chafe, 1970) instead, we assume that humans have in reality universal semantic structures because humans are basically all alike in perceiving and thinking.

The production of an utterance, "The duck eats bread," for example, seems to be based on the semantic structure that calls for the initial identification of the *topic* for the purpose of effective communication between the communicators. Thus, the *topic*, IDENTIFIABLE DUCK, comes first and it is followed by the *comment*, EAT, BREAD. The idea of EAT requires the immediate following of BREAD because the idea EAT represented by the word "eats" semantically requires something that is to be eaten. These are all understood as part of universal semantic structures. When these semantic structures are to be linguistically symbolized, certain language-specific processes that have been internalized in the heads of the users of the language constrain the symbolization. Chafe (1970) proposed to call these processes as "post-semantic." Kessler (1975) and others have found that the notion of post-semantic processes is realistic in understanding language and language acquisition.

Once we admit that post-semantic processes are language-specific, we can explain the differences of languages. In English, for example, the *comment* composed of the ideas of EAT and BREAD is represented by "eats food." The idea EAT comes first and it is followed by FOOD. The verb "eats" indicates that its topic is singular and the tense is present. In Korean, by contrast, BREAD is represented first, followed by EAT, which will read:

Korean: ppang ŭl mŏg mŭnda
English: bread eat

Besides the difference we can see in the order of words arranged in Korean and in English, there are differences in word-endings, too. In Korean, the case of BREAD, i.e., objective, and the function of EAT as a verb are indicated by the endings "-ul" and "-da" respectively, while the number of the verb EAT is not indicated. These are all understood as matters of language-specific post-semantic processes.

A child has his semantic structures getting mature as he grows up naturally, and at the same time he acquires the post-semantic processes in the cultural-social environment he is immersed in. When a fluent L1 speaker gets immersed in an L2 speaking environment, he learns the new post-semantic processes. In this way of understanding language and

language acquisition, the unrealistic notion of pre-existence of linguistic knowledge of universal deep structure does not have to be assumed at all (Clark, 1974).

How should we define the relationship between spoken and written language in this realistic way of understanding language and language acquisition? As we admit the existence of post-semantic processes that make languages differ in their symbolization processes, so we should admit the existence of certain different characteristics of spoken and written language. This notion is obviously different from Fries' definition of written language as secondary to speech, and from Goodman's assumption of pre-existing linguistic knowledge of universal deep structure that directs listening and reading performances.

In the course of human language development, we think, spoken language and written language came to be differently used with different purposes and forms. This is probably repeated in each individual's development. In contrast to the responses of young children, Pellegrino & Scopesi (1978) found that older children's oral and written responses to pictures differed more significantly in their forms of expressions.

What is more important in written-spoken distinction is that they are used differently in different comprehension contexts (Olson, 1977; Rubin, 1980). Briefly, it can be said that spoken language is used with many other supplementary contexts than language itself and it is used between people face to face. Written language is usually used for the construction of reading material that has to be organized for the reader's possible comprehension with no situational contexts provided.

Acquisitional aspects are also different. Spoken language is "naturally" acquired in the situational contexts given. It is required for human survival. Written language is to be *learned* usually for certain educational purposes. Learning to read written L2 appears to require more time than learning to use spoken L2 (Kim, 1983).

Written language is not identical with spoken language. It is now, in fact, a major trend to study written language as language in comparison with spoken language (Chafe, 1980; Kroll & Vann, 1981; Akinnaso, 1982; Leu, 1982; Tannen, 1982a, 1982b).

Next, how should we define the unit of meaning and language? The rejection of word-centered school grammars and acceptance of the sentence as a linguistic system by structuralist and transformationalist grammarians was an obvious improvement over the school grammars. However, the

linguistic unit should have been sufficiently enlarged to connected discourse to account for certain linguistic phenomena that can hardly be explained within the sentence-centered framework.

The most appropriate unit of meaning and language is *text*. Any size of meaning and language could be a text in communication. Suppose one had certain meaning in mind that could be satisfactorily symbolized by a single word, then the word would be the text, or the most appropriate unit. Suppose he had certain meaning in mind that could be satisfactorily symbolized by a single sentence, then the sentence would be the text. Suppose, again, that he has certain meaning in mind that can be satisfactorily symbolized only by a sequence of sentences, then the whole connected discourse is the text, or the most appropriate unit of the meaning and language.

In reality, a single word or a sentence is not sufficient for effective communication. We usually find more than one idea emerging into our mind for their linguistic expression. These ideas related to one another in some way or other are symbolically realized through a linguistic system into words and sentences. The words and sentences would remain textually and semantically unrelated to one another but for the means that link them together as a whole, a *text* in language. In other words, what we know or think in a context can be expressed in a well-formed text in language only when the elements of our knowledge are linked together appropriately by means of certain linguistic devices. The linguistic devices that help form cohesive ties in a text may be referred to as "textual devices" (Kim, 1981, 1982, 1983).

Examples of textual devices include conjunctions, tenses, pronouns, articles, ellipses, and substitutions. In addition to the functions of these textual devices, lexical structure, syntactic structures, and order of sentences in a text also contribute to the establishment of textuality (Chafe, 1972, 1980; Halliday & Hasan, 1976; de Beaugrande, 1980).

A new approach to reading can be developed based on the two realistic linguistic notions: the definition of written language as a language unidentical with spoken language and the definition of text as the unit of meaning and language. In L1 reading, Fillmore (1982) organized a reading study with such realistic linguistic notions as the theoretical background of the study.

*Discussion*

The traditional L2 reading approaches have had a definite influence over the current trends in L2 instruction and research. Fries' approach has been adopted for many instructional methods. In Korea, for example, in ESL reading at the beginning stage is often emphasized only as one method of learning spoken English. The sentence is the usual unit of teaching English, especially in teaching English grammar (Kim, 1982).

Goodman's approach has been strongly advocated by many miscue analysis researchers. No particular issue in L2 reading research had been formed before the rise of the Goodman's miscue analysis as an important research paradigm (Hatch, 1974). Since Goodman (1971), a large number of research studies have been reported on the issue of one single reading process (Goodman , 1978; Connor, 1981).

However, once the linguistic notions behind these two traditional approaches are rejected as unrealistic, a third approach should be developed for its introduction into the L2 reading field. We will examine some data for the rejection of the traditional linguistic notions and for the establishment of legitimacy of the realistic notions: i.e., the definition of written language as a language and the definition of text as the appropriate linguistic unit, all based on the ideation theory (Chafe, 1970) that assumes the real existence of ideas prior to their linguistic representation through the post-semantic processes.

## *Examination of Reality of Linguistic Notions*

*Naturalistic data*

In this section, a small portion of the vast amount of naturalistic data will be used for an examination of the reality of the linguistic notions, and another portion will be used in the next section for an exploratory study of ESL text comprehension and construction. The naturalistic data had been collected from my own children for three years beginning in January, 1979, 48 times in all in four categories, i.e., free talking, draw-tell, look-tell, and read-retell monologues, consuming approximately 10,500 minutes for the recording.

I went to the U.S. in 1978 as a Fulbright scholarship grantee to take doctoral coursework at the State University of New York at Albany. My wife and children were there with me.

The children, Mi Kim (girl), Ho and Tae (boys), from whom the data

had been collected were 5, 7, and 11 years old when they arrived in Albany in November, 1978. None of them spoke English at all because English is not spoken in Korea. English is only learned as an international language at secondary and higher educational institutions.

The children started to attend a school in December, 1978. At the beginning, Korean was dominantly spoken at home; gradually, however, English became the dominant language among the children. Their mother usually spoke Korean to them. I spoke as much English as possible. Between the parents, Korean was usually used. No corrections of the wrong utterances of the children were attempted for any educational purpose. They were free to use any language at home. Various books written for native speakers were sufficiently supplied, and the children were encouraged to read any of them freely. An average of about three hours a day was spent watching TV. All the children regularly attended Sunday School. They often visited the public library.

For free talking, the children sat around the table in the living room and talked only in English while their talking was recorded on a tape recorder placed in the middle of the table. The free talking data are beyond the scope of the discussion of this paper.

In draw-tell activities, each child drew pictures on a piece of paper and then talked about the drawings in English, which was recorded. Each child repeated his or her English story in Korean immediately after the talking in English. The Korean version was also recorded. They did not repeat English in Korean any more when they spoke English fluently.

In look-tell activities, each child was asked to respond in English to a given picture one at a time, six pictures for one recording. The monologues were all recorded.

In reading-retelling activities, each child read an English passage and retold the whole text in Korean. All readings and retellings were recorded.

*Draw-tell monologues*

On following pages, we see two series of drawings and two monologues produced by Mi Kim. She was 5 years old when the data were collected in February and March, 1979.

Mi Kim was asked to draw things freely on a piece of paper and talk about her drawings in English first, then in Korean. All were recorded on a tape recorder and transcribed verbatim. Her Korean versions were translated in English.

NOTES: Utterances in the monologue are marked with serial numbers. Words spoken in Korean were put in English typed here in the upper-case.

MONOLOGUE 1-2. Recording date: 2/3/79

1. **Surprise.**
2. **Come on, Tae. (NOTE: "Tae" is one of Mi's brothers.)**
3. **You wanna milk?**
4. **No...**
   **No, no, no; Yes.**
5. **Oh, my baby. You wanna milk?**
6. **Yes, I do.**
7. **Come on, baby.**

**In Korean: SURPRISED AND (SHE) SAID, HEY, COME HERE. DO YOU WANT TO DRINK THIS, MILK? NO, NO, NO... I WANT TO DRINK IT. MY BABY... YOU... DO YOU WANT TO DRINK THIS, MILK? COME HERE.**

MONOLOGUE 1-3. Recording date: 3/3/79

1. **School go.**
2. **Yes, sir.**
3. **Father, mother. (NOTE: Mi is reading the words in the drawing.)**
4. **O.K., good, excellent.**
5. **Milk, hurry up eat.**
6. **Coat.**
7. **Um... um... What did you eat today?**
8. **Milk, cookie...**

**In Korean: GO TO SCHOOL. YES, SIR. "FATHER, MOTHER." GOOD. EXCELLENT. DRINK MILK QUICKLY. COAT. WHAT DID YOU EAT, TODAY? MILK AND COOKIES.**

The first one, MONOLOGUE 1-2, was recorded in the third month of her arrival; the second one, MONOLOGUE 1-3, in the fourth month.

To produce the first MONOLOGUE, Mi Kim produced four *disconnected* drawings. The first two utterances, i.e., #1: "Surprise," and #2: "Come on, Tae," were produced in relation to the first drawing. Tae is one of her brothers. In the drawing, two persons are facing to each other. Apparently, Mi Kim meant to show that the two persons were talking to each other.

Utterances #3 and #4 were between the two persons in her second drawing: "You wanna milk?" "No... No, no, no; yes."

Utterances #5 and #6 were between two persons in her third drawing: "Oh, my baby. You wanna milk?" "Yes, I do."

There are two persons again in the fourth drawing, but she produced only one utterance, #7: "Come on, baby."

Next, let us examine the second one, MONOLOGUE 1-3. Mi Kim produced six drawings on a piece of paper; and this time the drawings appear *meaningfully connected*, all about a day of a schoolgirl.

Two persons appear in the first drawing, and Mi Kim produced two utterances, #1 and #2: "School go," and "Yes, sir."

The second is a drawing of a classroom. She did not say anything about it. She skipped over it in her talking.

In the third appears a book on which two words are written: "Fath Meth," incomplete and misspelled "FATHER, MOTHER." She produced an utterance, #4: "O.K., good, excellent."

The next one looks like a drawing of children having lunch at school. She produced an utterance, #5: "Milk, hurry up eat."

A coat appears in the next and she said, "Coat." It seems that Mi Kim intended to show that the girl was leaving her school.

In the last, a man and a girl appear; they are walking, and Mi Kim produced two utterances, #7 and #8: "What did you eat today?" "Milk, cookie." Actually, I used to walk Mi Kim home after school almost every afternoon, and I used to ask her, "What did you eat at school today?" Her usual answer was "Milk, cookie..." etc.

*Reading-retellings*

Let us examine Mi Kim's retelling in Korean after reading English sentences. Mi Kim did not go to school in Korea and she did not learn how to read in Korean. In the United States she began to go to the

Jill said, "Look, Bill.
Look at Ben and the ducks."

Ben said, "Here is a duck.
The duck can get this."

Clymer, Theodore. A duck is a duck. Boston, Mass.: Ginn & Co., 1969.

*READING MATERIAL:*

# Ben said, "Here is a duck. The duck can get this."

*READING-RETELLING 1-3. Recording date: 2/17/79*

| *Mi* | *Researcher* |
|---|---|
| **"Ben said, here is a duck."** | |
| **BEN SPOKE, LISTEN...NOW!** | **HERE! "Here is a duck."** |
| **I DON'T KNOW THIS.** | **YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW IT.** |
| **(Mi points to the 'is' in the sentence.)** | **IT MEANS 'EXIST.'** |
| | **WHAT'S 'duck'?** |
| **'Duck' is DOG.** | **IT'S 'dog'. THIS IS 'DUCK'.** |
| **"The duck can get this."** | |
| **I DON'T KNOW.** | |
| **(Mi points to the 'duck'.)** | **WHAT'S 'can get this'?** |
| **I DON'T KNOW.** | **'Get this'?** |
| **TAKE IT.** | **'Can get this' IS 'ABLE TO TAKE THIS'.** |
| | **"The duck can get this."** |
| | **WHAT'S THAT?** |
| **I DON'T KNOW.** | **LOOK AT THE WORDS.** |
| **I DON'T KNOW THIS.** | |
| **(Mi points to the 'the'.)** | **YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW IT.** |
| | **'The duck' IS 'DUCK'.** |
| **I DON'T KNOW 'can'.** | |

*READING-RETELLING 1-4. Recording date: 3/25/79*

| *Mi* | *Researcher* |
|---|---|
| **"Ben said, here is a duck."** | |
| **BEN SAID, HERE...UH...** | |
| **I DON'T HAVE** | |
| **TO KNOW 'is', RIGHT?** | **UHU.** |
| **'a'...WHAT'S 'a'?** | **YOU DON'T HAVE TO KNOW IT.** |
| **'duck'...LOOK AT DUCK...NO,** | |
| **DUCK...I DON'T HAVE TO** | |
| **KNOW 'the', RIGHT?** | **WAIT. WHAT'S "Here is a duck"?** |
| **UH?...BEN SAI—D, I CAN'T SAY** | |
| **IT IN KOREAN.** | **WHAT'S "Here is a duck"?** |
| **HERE IS DUCK.** | **GOOD. YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY** |
| | **ONE WORD AT A TIME.** |
| **"The duck can get this."** | |
| **DUCK CAN GET IT.** | |

kindergarten but she did not learn how to read at school. At home, however, she was provided with books written for English speaking children. She often listened to me or her mother reading in English every time she wanted to "read" a book. She often read after the reader. She was helped to understand the content of the book in general; and yet, no direct translation of the English words into Korean was given, unless she insisted on certain translation.

For the recording, she was asked to read English sentences aloud and say their meanings, as she understood them, in Korean. She was encouraged to ask any questions about the story or whatever. Her reading-retellings in Korean and discussions proceeded in Korean were all recorded and transcribed verbatim. Korean words uttered by Mi Kim and me in the recording process were translated in English and printed in the transcriptions in the upper case.

The preceding is the reading page used for the recording and Mi Kim's first reading-retellings recorded in the third and fourth month of her arrival in the United States. The sentences read were from a school reader, *A duck is a duck* (Clymer, 1969).

**PRINTED TEXT: Ben said "Hers is a duck.**
**The duck can get this."**

Mi Kim read aloud the sentence, "Ben said, "Here is a duck," all right. However, her retelling in Korean reads: BEN SPOKE...LISTEN...NOW! Obviously she misunderstood the sound of "here" as that of "hear" and the meaning of "here" as that of "now." Probably because they have similar phonetic and semantic features. At that moment, I said in Korean, "YOGI," which means "here" in English, and then I read the whole sentence in English with an intention to encourage that she try understand the sentence appropriately.

Then Mi Kim pointed to the word, "is," and said in Korean, "I DON'T KNOW THIS." I said in Korean that she did not have to know it, but I added that it meant EXIST.

In an attempt to help her understand the meaning of the sentence, I asked her WHAT WAS THE WORD, "duck." She said "duck" was KAE in Korean which means "dog" in English. So I said KAE was a "dog" in English and a "duck" in English was ORI in Korean.

Mi Kim read the next sentence aloud in English all right: "The duck can get this." But she pointed to the word "a duck" and said that she did not know it. So I asked what "can get this" meant. She said she did not know. Then I asked what "get this" meant. She said in Korean it was TAKE IT. She was told then that "can get this" in English meant BE ABLE TO TAKE THIS in Korean.

After that, I read the whole sentence in English and asked Mi Kim its meaning. She was also told to LOOK AT THE WORDS, because she appeared to try to get the meaning by looking at the picture.

Mi Kim pointed to the word "the" and said that she did now know it. She was told that she did not have to know it. She was also told that "the duck" was simply ORI in Korean. She then wanted to know the meaning of "can."

In her second reading-retelling, i.e., 1-4, which was recorded in the fourth month of her arrival, Mi Kim again complained that she did not know the meanings of individual words, such as "is," "a," and "the." However, when she was asked to say the meaning of the whole sentence, "Here is a duck," she demonstrated that she comprehended it. But still, she had not read aloud the two sentences in a succession, nor did she demonstrate that the two words "a duck" and "the duck" in "Here is *a duck. The duck* can get this," were textually connected. We know that she had no idea at all about the use of "a" and "the" in English because she complained that she did not know them individually. In the reading text, however, the "duck" was repeated in the two sentences, and she did not recognize the meaning of the repeated use of the same word in the connected sentences.

We have observed Mi Kim's reading-retellings. The points made clear in these observations, together with those in the observations of Mi Kim's draw-tell monologues, will be discussed to test reality of the linguistic notions behind the three L2 reading approaches.

*Discussion*

Earlier, two questions about the relationship between spoken and written language and about the unit of meaning and language were raised. Fries' and Goodman's L2 reading approaches were different from each other in that Fries defined speech as the language and Goodman defined pre-existing knowledge of universal deep structure as the language. They were the same in that they defined the sentence as the appropriate linguistic unit.

The realistic notions proposed were different from the traditional ones. According to the ideation theory that assumes real existence of ideas in human brain, universally identical structures of human perception and thinking are symbolically realized into different languages and unidentical spoken-written languages through post-semantic processes. Text is defined as the appropriate unit of meaning and language.

**Ideation theory.** The data we have observed seem to reveal that in reality ideas exist prior to their linguistic representation through post-semantic processes.

When Mi Kim uttered in her first monologue, "Come on," the meaning she had in mind must have been, "Come here." We know it because she said so in her Korean version. She simply used "Come on" incorrectly to represent the meaning, "Come here." "School go," was used to represent "Go to school." "Milk, hurry up eat" was used to represent "Hurry up and drink the milk."

"Come on" itself was not the very meaning she had in mind. Neither was "School go." No "school" could "go." These un-English expressions are evidence that Mi Kim's post-semantic processes were not developed well enough for English representations of her ideas. From this fact we can infer that meanings, or ideas, had existed in her mind as entities separable from their linguistic representations.

In her first reading-retelling, Mi Kim said, "I don't know" frequently, pointing to particular words. She failed to demonstrate that she comprehends the text as a unified whole. In the second retelling, however, she demonstrated that she had some sentential meanings formed in her mind approximately corresponding to "Here is a duck," and "The duck can get this." The ways that individual words were used were what she did not know. They constituted certain problems in her reading process, but she was able to form meanings in her head despite the individual words she did not know. From this we can also infer that meanings and words are not identical.

Once in the retelling Mi Kim attempted to say the meaning she had in mind by reading "Ben said, "Here is a duck," but she failed and complained that she could not say it in Korean. She must have the meaning formed in mind, but she simply failed to express it linguistically. Meanings, or ideas, appear to exist in reality prior to their linguistic expressions.

**Spoken vs. written language.** The data we have observed reveal that the beginning ESL speaker-reader was exposed to the definitely unidentical languages, spoken and written.

In the first monologue, Mi Kim uttered "Surprise," "Come on, Tae," and "You wanna milk?" etc., and in the second monologue, "School go," and "Milk, hurry up eat," etc. These incomplete and incorrect expressions were used for the purpose of communication between persons. Mi Kim demonstrated that she was aware of the communicative functions of the utterances; she actually used them appropriately in the given situational contexts. She acquired the communicative functions first, and we expect that in time later on she must have acquired appropriate linguistic forms for the same ideas.

In the reading-retellings, by contrast, Mi Kim constantly paid attention to the linguistic forms, especially individual words, like "a," "the," "is," and "can." She failed to *see* them within any given contexts, situational or textual. She once thought that "here" was LISTENING. This was one of the ample evidence from which we may infer that Mi Kim had to learn to grasp situational and textual contexts based on the perceived graphic cues and use the grasped contexts for further construction of meanings represented by the text.

The spoken and written language use different media, and their acquisitional requirements are also different. Sounding out the graphic forms cannot be all for effective reading. Definition of reading as sounding out graphic representations and definition of speech as the language appear simplistic. Listening and reading are not identical in their acquisitional aspects as well as in their media and functions.

As was earlier discussed, a transformationalist approach assumes preexistence of universal deep structure which realizes itself into spoken and written performances. But the assumption does not help explain Mi Kim's beginning English, for example, "School go," and "Milk, hurry up eat." It does not help explain Mi Kim's failure to comprehend what she was able to decode. The data we have observed seem to reveal evidence that leads us to reject the traditional notions.

**Text as the linguistic unit.** The data we have observed support real existence of *text* in mind and *text* in language that is composed of a sequence of sentences meaningfully and formally connected. The data suggest certain developmental aspects of the *textuality*, as well.

The drawings produced by Mi Kim for the first monologue recorded in the third month of her arrival were not meaningfully connected. There was no connection between the drawings. The English utterances and their Korean versions were not meaningfully connected, either.

Looking at the first drawing of two persons, she uttered, "Surprise," and "Come on, Tae." Her Korean version read: SURPRISED AND (SHE) SAID, HEY, COME HERE. Based on the Korean version and the drawing, we can guess that Mi Kim intended to say: The boy frightened the girl by saying, "Surprise!" and she said, "You frightened me. Come here, Tae." These form a *text* composed of more than one sentential meaning; yet, Mi Kim's English was not mature to produce a formally connected text. She simply produced two utterances in English, and then in Korean she described the girl's reaction to the boy and repeated what she had said.

The second drawing showed no connection with the first one. The two utterances, i.e., "You wanna milk?" and "No...No, no, no! Yes," seem to have been exchanged between the two persons in the drawing. These show no connection with the utterances produced in relation to the first drawing. The third and last drawings and her utternances did not have any apparent connection with others, either.

The series of drawings, by contrast, that Mi Kim produced for her second monologue, which was recorded in the fourth month of her arrival, had textuality established between the drawings. But still, she failed to formally establish the textuality in the whole monologue in English or in Korean. For example, there was no indication of who said what to whom. No situation was described at all.

The comparison of the two series of drawings and the two monologues recorded in the third and the fourth month respectively leads us to state that the first series of drawings was composed of four small texts in meaning with no formal establishment of their textuality, and that the second one was composed of one meaningfully unified text with no formal establishment of its textuality. We may predict that Mi Kim's linguistic development can be examined in terms of the expansion of text in mind and the formal expression of textuality in language.

In the two reading-retellings, too, we can observe obvious aspects relevant to textuality in mind and in language.

Regardless of her good way of sounding out the printed words, in the first and second reading-retelling alike, Mi Kim showed inappropriate formation of concepts of words like "here" and "duck" and her failure to deal with the sentence and the connected sentences as a meaningfully unified whole. On the other hand, she constantly complained that she did not know meanings of such individual words as "is," "can," "a," and "the."

In spite of my continuous efforts to lead her to deal with the whole sentence, in the first reading-retelling, Mi Kim failed to comprehend the sentential meaning. In the second reading-retelling, she was doing all right with each sentence; and yet, the textuality established between the two sentences was not comprehended by her. The use of the article, A and THE, which is an example of English textual devices, was not any help for her textual comprehension. Repetition of the word, ***duck***, in the sequence of two sentences did not do any good for her textual comprehension, either.

These and other observations in reading-retellings seem to provide evidence of existence of text as a semantic and linguistic unit in reality. We can also predict that in the future Mi Kim's knowledge of English textuality will grow as part of her ESL reading power.

To conclude this section, our observations of Mi Kim's monologues and reading-retellings provide us with evidence that leads us to accept the reality of the existence of ideas prior to their linguistic representations and the reality of textuality that establishes text in mind and text in language as an appropriate unit of meaning and language.

The acceptance of existence of ideas prior to their linguistic representations entails the notion of post-semantic processes (Chafe, 1970), which leads us to define written language as separable from spoken language. This conclusion implies that the data we have observed provide us with ground on which we are to state that the linguistic notions behind the two well established L2 reading approaches should be rejected as less realistic than the ones derived from the third linguistic theory.

## *Developmental Aspects of ESL Textual Knowledge*

### *An exploratory study of text comprehension and construction*

The data in the previous section disclosed some evidence of real existence of text in mind and text in language, spoken and written. In addition, there appeared certain possibility that we could observe some developmental aspects of ESL beginning speakers-readers' knowledge of textual devices in the data further collected from my children.

To explore the possibility empirically, in this section, we will examine the results of my initial analysis of a small portion of the vast amount of data collected from my children, Mi Kim, Ho, and Tae, for three years. The results had been orally reported earlier elsewhere (Kim, 1981).

The theoretical background of the study reported here was formed within Chafe's (1972) framework of textual knowledge, i.e., knowledge of the functions of textual devices such as verb-tense forms, conjunctions, noun-pronoun ties, and the article.

To illustrate, I walked Mi Kim home almost every afternoon on weekdays and I used to ask her the same question, "What did you eat at school today?" Now let us suppose that I did not ask the same question to her one afternoon, and that she related it to one of her friends as follows.

> My daddy asked me the same question every afternoon. So I expected him to ask me it again this afternoon. But he didn't.
> I don't know why.

Prior to this monologue, a text must have been formed in her mind. When she was realizing it in language, she used certain textual devices to establish the textuality in the spoken or written language. Tense was one of them. She consistently used past-tense forms to narrate what happened in the past. When the past feature terminated, she used the present-tense form in "I don't know why." "Every afternoon" in the first sentence and "this afternoon" in the second were the indication that the past tense of the first sentence was a general statement and that the past tense of the second was a particular statement.

Another textual device was the conjunction. "So" and "but" were the examples. Still another one was the noun-pronoun tie. "My daddy--him/he" and "the same question--it" were the examples.

The textual knowledge constitutes part of post-semantic processes. Beginning ESL speakers-readers' use of such textual devices in their text reading-retelling (or "text comprehension") and look-tell monologues (or "text construction") will be the data from which we can infer certain developmental aspects of their textual knowledge.

Specifically, the purpose of this analysis was to document developmental aspects of three Korean children's textual knowledge, i.e., knowledge of the functions and uses of ESL verb-tense forms, conjuctions, non-pronoun ties, and the article, A and THE.

*Data collection*

The data analyzed for this study had been collected approximately every six months since the children's arrival, six times altogether. The data collection times will be referred to as "Time 1, 2, 3, 4a, 4b, and 5." The unit of data collection and analysis was the text, i.e., the complete passage

for reading-retelling and the entire look-tell monologue produced by each child as an immediate response to a given picture. The conditions furnished for the data collection procedures including the materials used were the least controlled so that the contamination of the naturalness of each child's behaviors should be minimized in the reading-retelling and look-tell activities.

Three different levels of reading materials were used for the reading-retelling recordings. One story from the school textbook was used for the Time 1 recording (Level A). Three new stories, 1-2 grade level, were used for Time 2, 3, and 4a (Level B). Two new stories, 2-3 grade level, were used for Time 4b and Time 5 (Level C). These B and C level stories were from story books written for children. For the look-tell monologue recordings, three pictures were repeatedly used every Time.

For the reading-retelling recordings, each child read a given story aloud and then retold the story in Korean for Time 1 and 2, both in Korean and in English for Time 3, and then only in English for Time 4a, 4b, and Time 5. The Korean retellings were translated into English for the scoring procedure. For the look-tell recordings, each child produced monologues in English looking at the given pictures, one monologue for one picture, three monologues in all, each Time.

*Analysis*

The following operational procedures were applied to the analysis of the reading passages, retellings, and look-tell monologues.

1. Each reading passage was divided into several sentence groups, or sub-texts, according to the shifts and continuities of sub-themes. Sub-texts are usually linguistically marked by such demarcation devices as A(N)-noun forms that introduce new entities into the sub-texts, tense shifts and continuities, use of conjunctions and adverbs that mark shifts of sub-themes, and shifts of speakers. Punctuational marks are also important.
2. The sub-texts were marked with serial numbers.
3. Sentences and clauses within the whole passage were marked with circled serial numbers.
4. All textual devices above mentioned were marked with smaller serial numbers: for example, V1, V2,... Vn for verb-tense forms, C1, C2, ... Cn for conjunctions, N1, N2, .. Nn for noun-pronoun ties.

For the analysis of retellings in Korean, (1) each retelling was read from

the first to the last word; (2) sub-texts in the retelling were demarcated according to the structure of sub-texts in the corresponding reading passage; (3) the sub-texts were marked with the same serial numbers used for sub-texts in the reading passage so that the corresponding sub-texts could be identified and so that omitted or integrated parts in the retelling could be identified.

Then (4) the reading passage and the retelling were read once again. Next, (5) errors were identified in the sub-texts of the retelling compared with the corresponding sub-texts of the reading passage. (6) From among the identified errors in the retelling, those that appeared to be relevant to the textual functions of the devices marked in the reading passage were circled, and finally (7) the types of marked errors were classified on the analysis sheet according to the data arrangement procedure described below.

For the textual analysis of the functions of each of the textual devices, the three types of English texts, i.e., reading passages, look-tell monologues, and English retellings, were arranged as follows.

Graph paper with 1419 cells (33 by 43) were used as analysis sheet. Each column was for each sentence in the order of its appearance in the text, and each row was for each new item of tense forms or conjunctions or noun-pronoun ties that was to be entered in the order of appearance in the text.

Then, (1) I marked with serial numbers each sentence or clause in the text; (2) highlighted with a yellow color tipmarker all textual devices, for example, tense forms on the analysis sheet for tense forms, in the text; (3) marked with serial numbers the highlighted items in the text; (4) read the whole text from the first to the last word; (5) demarcated sub-texts with serial numbers according to the shifts and continuities of sub-themes; and (6) read the whole text once again to confirm the demarcation according to such linguistic markers as tense shifts, conjunctions, shifts of speakers, etc.

For the scoring procedure of the reading-retellings, tense markers, conjunctions, and noun-pronoun ties in each sentence or clause of the textual structure were re-arranged into a form of criteria sheet for the matching procedure of the textual structure of the reading passage and that of the child's retelling. The match or mismatch of each item on each side determined the gain or loss of a score. The raw scores were converted into the percentages.

The scoring procedure was not applied to the Time 1 reading-retelling, because the reading passage used for the Time 1 recording was the one the children had access to prior to the recording, and because Mi Kim, the youngest one, failed to retell the story after her reading. The scoring method was not applied to the look-tell monologues, either, because no criteria were available. Instead, certain developmental aspects were observed. The observations are described below in the results.

*Results: reading comprehension*

As Table 1 shows, the children's general textual knowledge in reading increased as the time passed. The averages were 48, 52, and 89 at Time 2, 3, and 4 respectively when the easier reading passages (Level B) were used. The individual child's textual knowledge demonstrated the same

**Table 1. Reading Scores:** *Textual knowledge* in general (Gen.), and individual *textual devices: T for tense; C for conjunction; and N for noun-pronoun.*

| | *RDG* PASS A | *RDG PASS B* | | | **RDG PASS C** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Time 1 | Time 2 | Time 3 | Time 4a | **Time 4b** | **Time 5** |
| | T* C N | T C N | T C N | T C N | **T C N** | **T C N** |
| Mi | 29 30 40 | 50 25 54 | 90 75 88 | **67 40 54** | **56 33 86** |
| Gen. | (35) | (47) | (86) | **(55)** | **(69)** |
| Ho | 36 30 50 | 42 38 58 | 100 88 76 | **67 60 50** | **78 33 90** |
| Gen. | (43) | (49) | (86) | **(55)** | **(78)** |
| Tae | 71 30 77 | 67 63 73 | 100 75 94 | **89 60 67** | **89 67 86** |
| Gen. | (67) | (68) | (94) | **(71)** | **(83)** |
| AVE. | 45 30 56 | 53 42 62 | 97 79 86 | **74 53 57** | **74 44 86** |
| Ave. Gen. | (48) | (52) | (89) | **(60)** | **(77)** |

* T for Tense
C for Conjunction
N for Noun-pronoun

pattern of development. The individual differences seemed to reflect their age differences: Tae, the oldest one, was always at the top by far; Ho was the next, followed by Mi Kim, the youngest.

The children's reading scores, however, apparently dropped when the higher level reading passages were used: at the 4th Time period, 4b, the average on Level C reading was 60 (cf. 89 at Time 4a); each showed an almost uniform drop (Mi Kim and Ho, 55 from 86; Tae, 71 from 94). Then at the 5th Time period, each one's score and the average on another Level C reading demonstrated an increase again by 17%.

The two textual devices, tense and noun, disclosed an apparent developmental pattern at each succeeding Time period. But the score on conjunction dropped at Time 5. The individual scores on the textual devices, tense and noun, demonstrated the same trend of development. Almost identical individual differences were found as was the case of the general textual knowledge. The scores on conjunctions showed no particular developmental patterns.

*Results: text construction*

The texts constructed by the children provided several facts that seemed to be relevant to developmental aspects of the textual knowledge manifested in the reading scores.

In the area of tense forms, the Time 1 and 2 data were found explicitly indicating the characteristics of immaturity in the control of verbs and tense forms. The two younger ones used the word "is" dominantly but non-discriminantly at Time 1. At Time 2, other verbs than "is" replaced the unacceptable use of "is" but their tense forms were not in control: most of them appeared in the present-tense (or non-tense) forms and several were in the past-tense forms. Tae was not using "is" exclusively at Time 1. Some verbs were in the present-tense forms and others in the past. The present/past-tense forms, however, were not used for appropriate establishment of textuality.

The Time 3 and 4 data demonstrated a considerably developed textual knowledge in the use of tense forms. Mi Kim's use of 8 past-tense forms and 38 present-tense forms at Time 3 were not in her complete control; at Time 4, however, she demonstrated a good control of tense forms by consistently employing present-tense forms. Ho's maturity in the control of tense forms appeared at Time 3 and Tae's at Time 2. At Time 4, Tae's data demonstrated the use of 7 different kinds of verb phrases, but it was

at Time 5 that Mi Kim and Ho used more than 5 different kinds of verb phrases.

Time 3 and 4 appeared to be the most important periods in the area of noun-pronoun ties, too. At Time 3, each child demonstrated the appropriate use of pronouns in relation to the noun-pronoun ties. In Tae's texts, 2 ties were identified at Time 1 and 5 at Time 2; in Ho's texts, 6 ties were identified at Time 2, and it was at Time 3 that Mi Kim's texts documented the first appearance of the noun-pronoun ties.

These seemed to be relevant to the fact that Mi Kim and Ho were using the word "this" (and "that") very frequently at Time 1; at Time 2, however, "here"/"there" began to be more frequently used, and it was at Time 3 again that various pronouns began to be used most frequently. Tae was already using "here" and several different pronouns at Time 1.

The two areas of the use of article + noun forms and the use of conjunctions did not disclose any identical developmental patterns that the other areas showed. Time 3 and 4 appeared to be important in the area of the use of article + noun forms; however, no child demonstrated a full control of the use of articles during the 5 succeeding Time periods. At Time 3, Ho and Tae demonstrated that they were using about 60% of the article cases correctly and Mi Kim 33%. At Time 4, Mi Kim demonstrated that she was using the article cases as well as Tae and Ho. And yet the Time 5 data did not show any apparent decrease of the 30% or 40% incorrect use of article cases.

Mi Kim and Ho used only 2 or 3 different conjunctions until Time 5 when they used more than 7 different conjunctions. Tae used 5 at Time 2, 7 at Time 3, and 9 at Time 4.

To conclude, the results of the analysis based on the realistic linguistic notions can be generalized as an indication of strong possibility of forming a hypothetical construct of "textual knowledge."

The analysis disclosed the gradual development of the textual knowledge manifested in the three textual devices. The developmental levels of textual knowledge seemed to be related to the level of reading passages. The developmental pace of the ESL speakers' textual knowledge seemed to be definitely related to the children's age or socio-educational experiences.

The text construction data disclosed certain characteristics of the ESL children's immature textual knowledge and some developmental patterns of the textual knowledge. These provided some explanations about the

reading scores. Particularly, the Time 3 and 4 periods (1½ and 2 years) appeared to be the time when the children's knowledge of many textual devices was considerably developed. This may be related to the fact that the children demonstrated the highest reading scores at Time 4a. It was also the time when a higher level of reading passages had to be used and when the children preferred to retell the story in English.

## *Conclusion*

Reading was defined, at the beginning of this paper, as a language process. Three linguistic theories were discussed for a better understanding of the notions provided by them that founded three L2 reading approaches: the notions about the relationship between spoken and written language and about the unit of meaning and language.

The traditional linguistic notions behind the two well-established L2 reading approaches (Fries, 1967; Goodman, 1971) were rejected as less realistic than the notions provided by a third linguistic theory (Chafe, 1970, 1972, 1982; Halliday & Hasan, 1976; Shuy, 1981). Mi Kim's draw-tell monologues and reading-retellings were examined for the support of the realistic notions.

Finally, an exploratory study of ESL beginners' textual knowledge was reported to document certain developmental aspects of textual knowledge in ESL and to ascertain the possibility of forming a hypothetical construct of "textual knowledge."

In an instructional context, according to the conclusion of this paper, we would rather try to teach both spoken and written language. Written language is not secondary to speech. Whether we mix spoken and written language for an integrated instructional purpose or we teach L2 reading independently, we now should not forget that written language is a language in itself.

The unit of meaning and language we deal with for an instructional purpose should be *text*. Words and sentences should be dealt with within the *text*—the meaningfully and formally unified whole.

The study presented in the last section was an exploratory one. Further study in this line should be conducted for extension and expansion of the realistic linguistic notions as well as for confirmation or modification of the conclusion of the analysis and the conclusion of this paper.

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# PART TWO

Chapter II

# *Effects of Prior Knowledge on ESL Reading*

Safiah Osman

## *Introduction*

In recent years, comprehension is one aspect of reading that has received a great deal of attention from teachers, theorists and researchers. To be noted, however, is that compared to the extensive investigations into the variables which may influence how native speakers of English comprehend text, there is relatively less research on the subject when those concerned are learners of English as a second language (ESL).

One specific variable which has been relatively unexamined in second language reading comprehension research is that of the role of prior knowledge. It is somewhat surprising that despite the plausibility and wide acceptance of the view that prior knowledge has a facilitative effect on the reading comprehension of readers when reading in their native languages, very little is known about the effects of this same variable on the comprehension of text by ESL readers.

For too long, teachers and researchers in the second language field have viewed comprehension difficulties as being primarily caused by difficult language. The general view has been that "inadequate grasp of the language" (Hatch, 1974), or "linguistic shortcomings" (Hill, 1981), is the cause of poor reading comprehension performance. In other words, the concern has mainly been on the mismatch between the language used in the text and the language proficiency or competence of the readers. The possibility that relevant prior knowledge about a topic may also crucially determine the extent ESL readers comprehend text has been somewhat overlooked. This had left an important gap in the research on ESL reading. In fact, we can say that interest and research on the subject of prior knowledge and how it may affect second language reading comprehension is only just beginning (Johnson, 1981, 1982; Hudson, 1982; Carrell & Wallace, 1983). To date, the only review on the subject is that undertaken by Carrell (1983a).

Clearly, there is still a great deal to be learned about the role of prior

knowledge in second language comprehension. A greater understanding of the effects of prior knowledge on second language reading comprehension may help us to better understand the cognitive processes involved in reading texts written in non-native languages. Basically, the studies mentioned above have not examined the role of prior knowledge in relation to subjects' language proficiency or competence in both the native language (L1) and the second language (L2). With this in mind, the study reported here has attempted to extend research in the area of ESL reading by examining the relationship of three major explanatory variables to reading comprehension performance, i.e. prior knowledge, language proficiency in L1 and language proficiency in L2.

There are undoubtedly additional variables to consider in coming to a complete understanding of what may influence second language reading comprehension. Nevertheless, the focus in the present study had been on the role of the above-mentioned three explanatory variables. Given the English language learning environment in Malaysia, where the study was undertaken, an additional variable which has been included, though minor, was that of school type.

To start with it should be noted that after excluding the independent or private schools, there exist two types of schools in Malaysia. The first is the "national" school where the medium of instruction is Bahasa Malaysia, the national language of the country. With respect to the second type of school, commonly referred to in the context of the Malaysian education system as the former "national-type" school, the medium of instruction until recent years was English.

At this point, it may also be appropriate to mention that generally speaking, students from "national" schools were mainly native speakers of Malay. The school enrollment in the former "national-type" schools is until the present usually more racially mixed, i.e., comprising students of Malay, Chinese and Indian ethnic backgrounds. Although the use of Bahasa Malaysia, the national language is already the greater ethnic diversity in the former "national-type" school necessitates the increased use of English in both school and out-of-school communication.

An additional point to note is that in the present study, subjects were taken from two schools, a "national" school and a former "national-type" school. While those from the "national" school were boys, subjects from the former "national-type" school were girls. Thus, a major reason for the inclusion of the school type variable was to examine the possibility

that sex and the racial composition of schools may also influence second language reading comprehension.

The relative importance of each variable and the contribution of each to reading comprehension performance was examined. The present investigator is of the opinion that any research which examines the process of second language reading without taking into consideration the possible effects of all three major variables and any other additional variable will contribute little to the understanding of that process.

### *Role of Prior Knowledge in Reading Comprehension*

A review of the existing literature reveals that compared to research on the role of prior knowledge, considerably more attention has been given to the role of either general language proficiency or reading abilities in ESL reading comprehension. In attempting to examine the role of language proficiency in L2, several researchers have investigated the differences and similarities between learning to read in a foreign or a second language and the ability to read in one's native language (e.g. Coady, 1979; Clarke & Silberstein, 1979; Cowan, 1976; Cziko, 1978, 1980; Kellerman, 1981). Convincing evidence in support of the notion of similar processes came from cloze and miscue analysis research (e.g. Rigg, 1977; Connor, 1981). A number of theorists (Clarke, 1979; Cziko, 1978, 1980; Ulijn, 1980), however, maintain that although L2 readers, similar to their native counterparts, rely on knowledge of the language and knowledge of the world, the difference lies in the fact that their limited language proficiency in L2 may place a ceiling on their ability to comprehend text written in the non-native language. Cziko (1978, 1980), for example, has argued that reading comprehension in a second language can be explained more readily in terms of the ability to read in that language. Clarke (1979) has additionally made the point that although assumptions about the unitary nature of the reading process or what he referred to as "reading universals" may be justified, the role of language proficiency may be more crucial in L2 reading than L1 reading.

A similar position, that level of language proficiency in the target language determines the extent to which the text is comprehended, has been taken by Ulijn (1980). He has asserted that undeniably there are certain similarities between L1 and L2 reading but the latter is less of a psycholinguistic guessing game because the reader is hindered by an imperfect knowledge of the target language. What has been implied by Ulijn (1980)

is that a psycholinguistic model of reading, seen as a process involving the ability to derive meaning from a printed text through the simultaneous use of grapho-phonic, syntactic, and semantic cues in text, is not really adequate to describe the process of second language reading. While it is assumed native speakers know the grammar of the language and are able to draw upon this knowledge in their reading, the non-native language reader is seriously handicapped. He will be less equipped to make the series of guesses from the various "cue systems" existing in written language.

From the arguments they have put forward so far, it can be summarized that this group of L2 researchers (Clarke, 1971; Cziko, 1978, 1980; Ulijn, 1980) maintain that despite some basic similarities between L1 and L2 reading, the latter depends much more on the learners' level of language proficiency in the target language itself. Unfortunately, the above-cited investigators have tended to minimize the role of relevant prior knowledge in second language reading comprehension.

A review of the literature also reveals that there is some discussion on a related question of whether or not second language learners' reading skills or abilities in the native language influence or even actually determine the ability to comprehend text written in the target language. Perhaps the strongest statement of this view has been expressed by Thonis (1970). According to that author, for the non-native readers, the skills in word recognition and the comprehension of text written in English can be built upon the native language literacy they already possess. Some empirical evidence on the subject has been provided by Deemer (1978), Groebel (1980) and a number of earlier investigators (Berra-Vasquez, 1953; Burns, 1968; Modiano, 1968). Taken together, these studies, particularly those undertaken by Groebel (1980) and Deemer (1978) seem to offer a rich but largely untapped, in any systematic sense, source of information on the role of L1 reading skills or abilities in second language reading comprehension.

To summarize at this point, one can say that while investigators including Clarke (1979), Cziko (1978, 1980) and Ulijn (1980), clearly see language proficiency in the second language as being of paramount importance, others including Deemer (1978) and Groebel (1980) have added that subjects' reading skills or abilities in the native language help to develop comparable efficiency in reading in the second language.

What is of particular interest is that other than the studies undertaken by Deemer (1978), Groebel (1980) and the earlier studies mentioned above,

there is virtually no other experimental data regarding the relationship between reading ability in the native language and effective second language reading. Clearly, for the present, if the relationship is somewhat mysterious, it is primarily because there are still questions left unanswered about the role of first or native language reading ability in the comprehension of text written in the second language.

The preceding discussion has drawn attention to relevant research which has examined the role of language proficiency in L2 or reading ability in L1 and L2 in the reading comprehension of text written in the second or non-native language. As already stated, there is only a small body of research which has examined whether prior knowledge may influence the reading comprehension of ESL readers. In his study, Hudson (1982) has focused on the role of the L2 learners' prior knowledge in reading comprehension. The significance of the Hudson study lies not in the author's specific hypotheses, but in the fact it represents the first systematic attempt to examine the way in which prior knowledge may influence ESL readers' reading comprehension. It has served to establish an important preliminary issue regarding the important role of prior knowledge and the way in which it may determine ESL readers' reading comprehension.

What Hudson (1982) has offered is a demonstration that similar to native language readers, non-natives access relevant or appropriate information when reading. He has shown that if readers are given appropriate information either through the presentation of pictures related to the general topic of the passage, a vocabulary list derived from the passage, or simply allowing them to preread the passage, they would be better able to gain meaning from passages written in the second language. These three types of intervention were designed to evoke the necessary concepts, referred to by Hudson as "externally-induced schemata". To state briefly, the important contribution of the study undertaken by Hudson (1982) is a demonstration of the use of relevant knowledge structures or schemata in ESL readers' reading comprehension. Even more important is his finding that schema utilization can override limited English language proficiency.

Several recent studies have drawn attention to the role of "story schemata" in reading comprehension. Researchers seem to generally agree that stories have a conventional structure and knowledge of these conventions may considerably facilitate comprehension. However, there is some controversy among those who have shed light on the role of story conven-

tions or structures. While, on the one hand, investigators including Kintch (1977) and Kintch and Greene (1978) have provided evidence that story schemata are culture-specific, on the other, Johnson and Mandler (1979) have argued that there may be "universals" in at least some types of story formats or more commonly referred to as "grammars".

The extent to which "story schemata" may influence ESL reading comprehension is also a relatively unexplored domain. Related studies include those which have examined the possibility that comprehension and recall by ESL readers may be affected by the cultural origin of the story. Carrell (1981a) found that there were statistically significant differences in the comprehension ratings of Japanese and Chinese subjects when reading native, European or American Indian culture stories. Together with data from an earlier experiment, Carrell has concluded that the cultural origin of the story may influence the comprehension and recall of text by ESL readers.

A study which has also attempted to verify the finding that the cultural origin of a text may influence comprehension and recall is that undertaken by Johnson (1981). Similarly influenced by a schema-theoretic view of reading, the investigator has shown that the cultural origin of a text may have more effect on comprehension than the level of syntactic complexity of both adapted and simplified passages. Stated in another way, the major finding was that when the subjects have relevant prior knowledge, in the sense that the cultural origin of the text is native to them, they were able to overcome the language difficulty of the passages. On the basis of such a finding, Johnson (1981) has stressed on the need to consider the non-textual elements in L2 reading.

A more recent study undertaken by Johnson (1982) examined the effects of both familiarity with the content of the informational input and direct instruction in dealing with related vocabulary. Subjects were found to be able to recall more information as well as able to make more correct inferences from sections of the passage which contained familiar material in comparison to sections containing unfamiliar material. Interestingly, however, exposure to meanings of preselected vocabulary words as found in the selections, did not seem to affect the comprehension of ESL readers. From the evidence provided by Johnson (1982), it can be aptly summarized that in the case of ESL readers, familiarity with the cultural context of a reading selection provides useful information necessary for a more accurate interpretation of text.

Recent studies in the area undertaken by Carrell (1983a) and Carrell

and Wallace (1983) have found no significant effects of prior or background knowledge on ESL subjects' reading comprehension. Contrary to expectations, the study found that among subjects whose native language is not English, the understanding and recalling of a text is not dependent on prior knowledge. Unfortunately, in both studies, the authors have offered very little in the way of a theoretical explanation for their negative findings, admitting to the fact that it is difficult to interpret such findings (Carrell, 1983b).

This divergence between the findings of the studies undertaken by Hudson (1982) and Johnson (1981, 1982), with the studies undertaken by Carrell and associates mentioned above is highly significant. The findings are also in sharp contrast to readers' comprehension performance in Carrell's earlier studies (1981a, 1981b) already mentioned, as well as those which have involved both native and non-native speakers of English (Steffensen, Joag-dev & Anderson, 1980).

Given these contradictory findings, there is a clear need for more research evidence to support a schema-theoretic view of second language reading in which prior knowledge is seen as a powerful variable influencing reading comprehension performance. In the studies undertaken by Carrell (1983b) and Carrell and Wallace (1983), the way prior knowledge has been assessed is questionable at best. Their exclusive reliance on the use of Bransford and Johnson's (1972, 1973) vague and ambiguous passage such as "Washing Clothes" and "Balloon Serenade" may have confounded the results. For all intents and purposes, the "Washing Clothes" passage, deemed as 'familiar' material remained incomprehensible to the subjects in the study simply because of its extreme ambiguity. There is also the remote possibility that there are cultural differences in the seemingly simple task of washing clothes.

Though not absolutely necessary, it is clear that the passages used were not anywhere at the extremes of a familiarity-unfamiliarity continuum. Briefly summarized, one serious limitation of the study undertaken by Carrell (1983b) is that of treating the familiarity variable as dichotomous, not continuous. Another is that in using material of contrived ambiguity, the findings may not be generalizable to instructional materials normally used in classroom settings.

Also to be noted is that a written recall procedure as used by Carrell and Wallace (1983) may not be the most appropriate measure of reading comprehension performance of non-native subjects. It is possible that sub-

jects' limited written production skills in English may have affected comprehension performance. As has already been found over and over again, ESL learners' receptive language competence is far in advance of their production ability.

From the foregoing discussion, it can be briefly summarized that given the limitations in the design, Carrell (1983b) and Carrell and Wallace (1983) have not been able to focus satisfactorily on the effects of prior knowledge on subjects' ESL reading comprehension performance.

Nevertheless, when taken together, the above mentioned investigators have provided sketches of possible directions for research in second language reading. The present study has attempted to draw together the studies mentioned above by taking into consideration the influence not only of relevant prior knowledge, but also subjects' language proficiency in L1 and L2. Within this larger framework, the investigator hoped to contribute to a better understanding of the variables which may influence ESL reading comprehension.

## *The Study*

The purpose of the present study was to examine the role of prior knowledge, language proficiency in L1 and language proficiency in L2 on the comprehension of text by second language readers. It was felt that it was necessary to account for the contributions of some potentially explanatory variables.

In examining the relationship between the three major explanatory variables and reading comprehension performance, the following research question was asked. Is there a relationship between the reading comprehension performance of ESL readers, the amount of their prior knowledge, and their language proficiency in L1 and L2?

Schema theory acknowledges the role of prior knowledge in reading comprehension. If schemata or relevant knowledge structures have been found to be activated during the process of reading and comprehending text, then the content of the material that is familiar will be more likely to be understood compared to the content of the material that is unfamiliar. With schema theory as the theoretical framework, the study has hypothesized that ESL subjects' reading comprehension performance should be significantly better on familiar compared to unfamiliar passages. With the above assumption in mind, the research reported here has attempted to ascertain whether reader familiarity with the content of the material will

significantly influence ESL reading comprehension performance. If this is the case, i.e., subjects could correctly respond to more comprehension questions based on familiar passages, then a schema theoretic view of ESL reading is supported.

*Subjects*

The subjects were 160 ESL readers at the fourth form level from two selected schools in the Kelang/Port Kelang area in Selangor Malaysia. The age range was 16.8 years to 17.8 years and subjects have had 10 years of formal schooling. Only Malay students were included in the sample. No other ethnic group was represented. Both schools, i.e. the Sekolah Tengku Ampuan Rahimah and the Sekolah Raja Perempuan Zarina were selected for two main reasons. Firstly, the first mentioned school represented a "national" school where the student population were relatively homogeneous in the sense that the students were practically all Malays. In the second mentioned school, frequently referred to in the context of the Malaysian education system as a former "national-type" school, the student population was racially mixed, more or less in accordance with the national population structure—50 percent Malays, 40 percent Chinese and 10 percent Indians. Secondly, both schools were located in a primarily semi-urban area where the socio-economic levels of the students were estimated to range from lower-middle class to upper-middle class. As previously stated, subjects from the "national school" were boys and those from the former "national-type" school were girls.

*Materials*

Cloze passages were used to assess subjects' language proficiency in L1 and L2. While the first passage was written in Malay, the native language, the second passage was written in English. For each passage, after the first lead sentence, the standard method of deleting every nth word was adopted. The theoretical justification for choosing the cloze procedure as a means to elicit information regarding subjects' language proficiency, centers on the evidence in both L1 and L2 research showing that the procedure correlates very highly with standardized language proficiency tests. Where L2 research is concerned, a number of investigators have pointed out that the cloze is a valid and reliable instrument for measuring L2 proficiency (Briere, 1973; Darnell, 1970; Oller, 1972; Oller, 1973; Stubbs & Tucker, 1974). Another key point to be made here is that for the pur-

poses of this study, the cloze is seen as being able to indicate how well the reader is able to synthesize his underlying knowledge about the language. In short, the cloze is seen as being able to determine as accurately as possible subjects level of language proficiency in both Bahasa Malaysia and English.

Four reading passages, two of which were culturally familiar (Hari Raya Puasa and Siamese Invasion in Kedah) and two culturally unfamiliar (Chinese New Year and British Attack in the South) were selected. In order to set realistic tasks for the subjects in the study, the readability level of all four passages approximated materials as found in their English language textbooks. They were slightly modified to ensure that there were no complex and/or highly idiomatic constructions. With the exception of the British Attack in the South passage which contained many proper nouns, all the passages were at the 6th - 7th grade level of difficulty as determined by the Fry Readability Graph (Fry, 1968). The primary reason in using the Fry Readability Formula was its appropriateness for material written on a third grade level and above.

To further establish comparability, the passages were of approximately equal length (ranging from 482-502 words). This variability in passage length was the result of having to maintain complete and well-formed stories. The passages were then divided into pausal or idea units following the procedures used by Johnson (1970) and Brown and Smiley (1977). It was found that all four passages contained approximately equal number of pausal or idea units.

In order to formally assess the extent of prior knowledge on each of the topics, a vocabulary test was developed. Eight words were randomly selected from each of the passages, and students were asked to write down in the native language, all that comes to mind when they see the words. All eight words were taken from only Level 4 (the most important group of idea units). Again, the procedure in determining the importance of structure units of prose passages was taken from those used by Johnson (1970) and Brown and Smiley (1977). All instructions and items on the test were in Bahasa Malaysia. The reason for this was to ensure that the instrument measures as fairly accurately as possible the students' amount of prior knowledge. It was felt that it was not really possible to obtain a true measure if subjects' ability to respond was confounded by their limited production skills in the second language.

There were 18 multiple-choice comprehension questions following each

of the passages. There were four choices for each question. To measure the internal consistency of the reading comprehension questions, the Kuder-Richardson reliability formula 20 based on dichotomously scored items was applied to all the 72 questions. The coefficient, $r_{tt}$, computed was 0.92, indicating an acceptable degree of reliability.

*Procedures*

Subjects were tested in groups. First, to establish language proficiency in L1 and L2, they were asked to read and fill in the missing words in two cloze passages. Whereas the first passage was written in Bahasa Malaysia, the native language, the second was written in English. A thirty minute time limit was set for the completion of each of the cloze passages.

Both cloze passages were scored twice, first by the exact word scoring and then by the more liberal scoring procedures of accepting synonyms and other acceptable responses. However, after considering the advantages of a more simplified scoring procedure and also that synonymic and acceptable replacements necessarily involve an element of subjectivity, only exact replacements were considered as correct.

A week later, subjects were administered a vocabulary test to determine the amount of relevant prior knowledge on each of the topics. Instead of a dichotomous division, responses were scored as 2 (much prior knowledge), 1 (some prior knowledge) and 0 (no prior knowledge). In general, this manner of scoring was adopted from the study undertaken by Langer and Nicholich (1981). When more than one response was given to a stimulus word, the highest response level was tabulated. The K-R reliability formula 20 was applied to estimate the internal consistency of this test of prior knowledge. The reliability of the test was calculated to be 0.87, which was acceptable.

*Data analysis*

In this study the dependent variable was total comprehension score measured in terms of number of correct responses to all comprehension questions. The three major independent variables were, (i) language proficiency in L1, measured in terms of scores obtained from a cloze test based on a passage written in Malay or Bahasa Malaysia; (ii) language proficiency in L2, measured in terms of scores obtained from a cloze test based on a passage written in English and (iii) the amount of prior knowledge measured in terms of scores obtained from a vocabulary test. Also includ-

ed was the additional variable of school type as well as joint effects of the above independent variables.

The statistical procedure in examining the effects of the above-mentioned independent variables on the dependent variable was mainly based on hierarchical multiple regressions. The regression models were tested on both familiar and unfamiliar passages together as well as familiar and unfamiliar passages separately. The use of the regression technique was felt to be appropriate on the ground that measures of the dependent and independent variables were continuous rather than discretely grouped.

*Results*

The results of the study indicated that prior knowledge was closely related to comprehension. When scores on familiar and unfamiliar passages were examined together, prior knowledge turned out to be an important determinant of reading comprehension, predicting 23.3 percent of the total comprehension variance [$F(1, 151) = 8.183$, $p < 0.01$] after taking into account the effects of language proficiency in L1 and L2 (Table 1). When data analyses were performed on familiar and unfamiliar passages separately, prior knowledge was a more powerful predictor of comprehension performance on familiar passages [$F(1, 151) = 8.126$, $p < 0.01$] compared to

Table 1: Reading Comprehension Variance Proportions From Familiar and Unfamiliar Passages: Influence of Prior Knowledge

| Independent Variables | F-ratio | Variance Proportions |
|---|---|---|
| L1 Language Proficiency | 0.762 | 0.0269 |
| L2 Language Proficiency | 0.480 | 0.2451 |
| Prior Knowledge (PK) | 8.183** | 0.2329 |
| School Type | 3.632* | 0.0128 |
| L1 × L2 | 0.024 | 0.0009 |
| L1 × PK | 2.628 | 0.0054 |
| L2 × PK | 0.815 | 0.0001 |
| L1 × L2 × PK | 1.053 | 0.0033 |
| N = 160 | $R^2 = 0.527$ | $R^{-2} = 0.502$ |

* $p < 0.10$
** $p < 0.01$

Table 2: Reading Comprehension Variance Proportions From Familiar and Unfamiliar Passages Separately: Influence of Prior Knowledge

| Independent Variables | Familiar | | Unfamiliar | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F-ratio | Variance Proportions | F-ratio | Variance Proportions |
| L1 Language Proficiency | 2.585 | 0.0694 | 0.004 | 0.0587 |
| L2 Language Proficiency | 6.581*** | 0.3314 | 1.013 | 0.3139 |
| Prior Knowledge (PK) | 8.126**** | 0.0258 | 1.199 | 0.0757 |
| School Type | 2.786* | 0.0121 | 4.409** | 0.0140 |
| L1 × L2 | 2.628 | 0.0001 | 0.001 | 0.0002 |
| L2 × PK | 3.954** | 0.0098 | 0.011 | 0.0011 |
| L2 × PK | 6.710*** | 0.0091 | 0.200 | 0.0034 |
| L1 × L2 × PK | 4.666** | 0.0163 | 0.002 | — |
| N | 160 | | 160 | |
| $R^2$ | 0.474 | | 0.467 | |
| $R^{-2}$ | 0.446 | | 0.439 | |

*P < 0.10
** p < 0.05
*** p < 0.025
**** p < 0.01

unfamiliar passages which was not significant (Table 2). In addition, it was also found that all interaction variables involving prior knowledge were significant at 0.05 level when the regression was done on the familiar passages. Surprisingly, only the school type variable was found significant at 0.05 level when the regression was done on the unfamiliar passages.

When the comprehension scores on familiar and unfamiliar passages were examined together and after removing statistically the effects of language proficiency in L1, it was found that the influence of language proficiency in L2 was statistically significant [$F(1, 155) = 6.533$, $p < 0.025$] accounting for 24.5 percent of the variance. Prior knowledge was also significant [$F(1, 155) = 7.761$, $p < 0.01$] but with a stronger effect, accounting for 36.7 percent of the variance (Table 3).

As shown in Table 4, when the regressions were applied separately to familiar and unfamiliar passages, language proficiency in L2 tended to have a stronger effect on the comprehension of unfamiliar passages than prior

Table 3: Reading Comprehension Variance Proportions From Familiar and Unfamiliar Passages: Relative Influence of L2 Language Proficiency and Prior Knowledge

| Variables of Equation 1 | F-ratio | Variance Proportions |
|---|---|---|
| L1 Language Proficiency | 0.057 | 0.0269 |
| L2 Language Proficiency | 6.533* | 0.2451 |
| School Type | 1.714 | 0.0069 |
| L1 × L2 | 1.232 | 0.0057 |
| N = 160 | $R^2$ = 0.285 | $R^{-2}$ = 0.266 |

*p < 0.025

| Variables of Equation 2 | F-ratio | Variance Proportions |
|---|---|---|
| L1 Language Proficiency | 3.067* | 0.0269 |
| Prior Knowledge (PK) | 7.761** | 0.3621 |
| School Type | 0.440 | 0.0015 |
| L1 × PK | 1.175 | 0.0046 |
| N = 160 | $R^2$ = 0.395 | $R^{-2}$ = 0.379 |

*p < 0.10
**p < 0.01

knowledge. Language proficiency in L2 explained 31.4 percent after taking out the effect of language proficiency in L1 [$F(1, 155) = 7.252$, $P < 0.1$], whereas prior knowledge accounted for 28.4 percent after taking out the effect of language proficiency in L1[$F(1, 155) = 3.427$, $p<0.10$]. However, when examining the performance on familiar passages, the reverse occurred, Prior knowledge showed to be a better predictor of comprehension performance [$F(1, 155) = 7.546$, $p<0.01$], accounting for 12.4 percent of the variance. L2 language proficiency contributed 33.1 percent but with a lesser degree of significance [$F(1, 155) = 5.540$, $p<0.025$].

Evidence therefore indicated that prior knowledge was more important for the understanding of familiar passages than unfamiliar passages. On the other hand L2 language proficiency tended to be more significant in the explanation of comprehension variance from unfamiliar than familiar passages. Overall, the slightly stronger effects of prior knowledge indicate

Table 4: Reading Comprehension Variance Proportions From Familiar and Unfamiliar Passages Separately: Relative Influence of L2 Language Proficiency and Prior Knowledge

| Variables of Equation 1 | Familiar | | Unfamiliar | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F-ratio | Variance Proportions | F-ratio | Variance Proportions |
| L1 Language Proficiency | 0.048 | 0.0694 | 0.199 | 0.0587 |
| L2 Language Proficiency | 5.540* | 0.3314 | 7.252** | 0.3139 |
| School Type | 2.145 | 0.0078 | 2.663 | 0.0097 |
| L1 × L2 | 0.241 | 0.0009 | 0.838 | 0.0033 |
| N = 160 | $R^2 = 0.386$ | $R^{-2} = 370$ | $R^2 = 410$ | $R^{-2} = 0.394$ |

*P < 0.025
**P < 0.01

| Variables of Equation 2 | Familiar | | Unfamiliar | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | F-ratio | Variance Proportions | F-ratio | Variance Proportions |
| L1 Language Proficiency | 4.769** | 0.0694 | 1.038 | 0.0587 |
| Prior Knowledge (PK) | 7.564*** | 0.1243 | 3.427* | 0.2839 |
| School Type | 0.072 | 0.0005 | 0.943 | 0.0040 |
| L1 × PK | 3.424* | 0.0174 | 0.085 | 0.004 |
| N = 160 | $R^2 = 0.347$ | $R^{-2} = 0.330$ | $R^2 = 0.212$ | $R^{-2} = 0.191$ |

*p < 0.10
**p < 0.05
***p < 0.01

that readers might need to have more than language competency advantages.

## *Discussion and Conclusions*

The source of ideas basic to this study has been schema theory rationale that the extent of prior knowledge that a reader possesses has a strong effect on his ability to comprehend text. Readers are said to use relevant prior knowledge to integrate the information found in the text. Hence,

when prior knowledge is adequate, comprehension is facilitated, and conversely, when prior knowledge is inadequate or not brought into use, comprehension is considerably impeded.

This study has been able to provide some empirical evidence on the effects of prior knowledge in relation to language proficiency in L1 and L2 in second language reading comprehension. The findings show that when the scores on the familiar and unfamiliar passages were examined together and after taking into account the effects of language proficiency in L1 and L2, the comprehension of text by ESL readers is strongly related to prior knowledge. In fact, prior knowledge was found to be a powerful variable influencing reading comprehension performance of these readers. This is indicated by the fact that prior knowledge accounted for over 20 percent of the total comprehension variance. Such a finding strongly suggests that contrary to the noting generally held by ESL teachers and researchers, the comprehension variance. Such a finding strongly suggests that contrary to the notion generally held by ESL teachers and researchers, the comprehension of text written in a second or non-native language entails more than the application of specific linguistic knowledge. Poor language or reading skills in the target language may only be a part of the larger picture of the potential problems of learning to read English as a second language. From the evidence available, the ability to gain meaning while reading depends on the relationship between what is in the text and the availability of relevant knowledge structures that the reader already possesses. To be noted is that Carrell and Eisterhold (1983) have earlier made explicit the point that ESL reading comprehension involves background knowledge which goes far beyond linguistic knowledge.

When the familiar and unfamiliar passages were examined separately, subjects' better performance on the familiar passages, even more strongly support the conclusion that ESL readers use prior knowledge to integrate the information found in the text. Another way of looking at the findings of the study is to say that familiarity with the cultural content of reading materials may considerably facilitate ESL reading comprehension.

The most reasonable explanation for the lower performance on unfamiliar passages, would be that when ESL readers possess less information (less elaborated schema) into which to integrate what is found in the text, comprehension performance inevitably suffers. It is likely that the concepts were too involved and abstract, and the ideas were rather remote from the experiences of the readers.

The results of the study, however, also indicate that both language proficiency in L2 and prior knowledge were powerful predictors of overall comprehension performance. Based on the results, it is impossible to single out which of the two variables is a more important predictor of ESL reading comprehension performance. In other words, there is no one answer to the complex question of whether prior knowledge or language proficiency in L2 is more important in influencing reading comprehension performance when readers read text written in the second or non-native language. Thus, the conclusion drawn by several earlier researchers that a certain "ceiling" or "linguistic threshold" is necessary before a second language reader can successfully comprehend text (Clarke, 1979; Cziko, 1978, 1980; Ulijn, 1980; Cummins, 1976) is supported. The results also lend support to the conclusion drawn by Hudson (1982) and Johnson (1981, 1982) that relevant prior knowledge may strongly influence ESL reading comprehension.

Insofar as the role of reading ability in L1 is concerned, there seems to be a lack of positive transfer in the sense that the variable was not found to be able to influence L2 reading comprehension performance to any significant degree. Such a finding is contrary to previous findings that there is positive transfer between reading skills or abilities in L1 and comprehension performance in the second language. Hence, another major conclusion that can be drawn is that proficiency or competency in the native language does not seem to develop comparable efficiency in reading comprehension performance when the text is written in the second language.

It can justifiably be concluded that there are some rather close parallels between how ESL readers and those reading in their native langauges comprehend text. ESL readers, similar to native language readers seem to organize their prior knowledge into a framework and that they use this framework to interpret the information in the text. The point should also be made that problems in text comprehension by ESL readers may be traceable not only to inadequate language skills in L2 itself or the lack of transferable reading skills or abilities in L1 but also to deficits in relevant prior knowledge.

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Chapter III

# *Reading Acquisition in Singapore* •

Seok M. Ng

## *Background*

One of Singapore's problems with reading acquisition programmes stems from the fact that although most of our children come from non-English speaking homes their parents' choice of the medium of instruction is English. This means that English is taught right from the first day the child enters school. Most of the other countries which teach English other than as a mother tongue use the mother tongue as a medium of instruction for several years before the introduction of English. Neither is the Singaporean child totally immersed in English at school because he also spends part of his school time learning another language, namely Chinese, Malay, or Tamil. Investigation into problems connected with the teaching of English and reading is therefore very important for Singapore, especially since one of our education system's streaming procedures is instituted very early, at the end of the third year of schooling at Primary 3.

The Reading Skills Project was set up initially to lay the groundwork for such an investigation by obtaining a description of the strengths and weaknesses of our lower primary children's reading skills. In response to a recent official request to present preliminary recommendations on teaching strategies by mid-1984, the scope of the study was enlarged. Besides collecting data on Primary 1-3 children's reading, it has included a search for reading instruction approaches appropriate for the Singapore classroom, and a systematic observation of reading class activities that included interviews of teachers on reading instruction issues. This paper rationalizes its recommendations for an instructional approach by discussing on one hand research findings on reading instruction needs, and on the other appropriateness of the recommended instructional approach.

• This paper presents part of the findings of a research study funded by the Institute of Education, Singapore. The other members of the team are Olivia Soh, Maureen Khoo, Gail Hanamoto-Rahman and Diana Lee Lew. The team wishes to thank others from the Institute of Education, especially Ng Chwee Poh and Claudia Sullivan for their help in the study.

Table 1: Time frame for the research project

| Year | Cohort 1 | Cohort 2 | Cohort 3 | Other Cohorts |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1983 | Primary 1 | Primary 2 | | Primary 3 |
| 1984 | Primary 2 | Primary 3 | Primary 1 | |
| 1985 | Primary 3 | | Primary 2 | Primary 1 |

### *The Children: Research Design and Procedures*

A longitudinal-cum-cross-sectional study was decided on as the most suitable design for collecting a description of the children's reading skills.

Table 1 shows that one cohort will be followed from Primary 1 to Primary 2 and then Primary 3. Cohorts 2 and 3 will be followed for only two years. Other cohorts can be obtained (i.e. one Primary 3 in 1983 and another Primary 1 in 1985) so that in any one year, data will in effect be collected at all 3 primary levels. Progress of these children will be monitored twice yearly.

The following instruments were used in the study; two running records (Clay, 1979a), the Burt Word Reading Test (Gilmore, Croft & Reid, 1981), the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability (Neale, 1969), the Diagnostic Decoding Inventory (Young, 1979), the Record of Oral Language (Clay, Gill, Glynn, McNaughton & Salmon, 1976) and Writing Vocabulary (Clay, 1979b).

The sampling procedure attempted to obtain as large a group of children as possible that would be representative of the general Singapore population. The first step towards the selection of the final sample was to obtain a stratified random sampling of 24 schools chosen on the basis of their English language results in the Primary School Leaving Examinations. A total of 3,765 children from Primary 1, 2 and 3, of these 24 schools were tested on the Burt Word Reading Test. On the basis of scores obtained on this test, the children were then allotted to 12 different groups of reading progress, 4 at each of the primary class levels (i.e. High, High Average, Low Average, Low). Random sampling proceeded from within these various groupings and finally a total of 312 children were selected.

The sampling procedure and the variety of measuring instruments chosen enabled us to test as many component skills and as wide a range of reading abilities as is possible so that we can observe reading difficulties in our poor readers and strategies employed by our good readers.

Table 2: Means for scores of children on battery of tests

| Level | No. of children | Burt Word | Diagnostic Decoding Inventory | Record of Oral Language | Writing Vocabulary | Familiar Texts | Unfamiliar Texts | Neale: Reading Accuracy | Neale: Reading Comprehension |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary 1 | 208 | 10.8 | 19.0 | 7.0 | 27.5 | 88.2 | 67.0 | 5.9 | 1.9 |
| Primary 2 | 207 | 28.7 | 51.5 | 13.8 | 45.5 | 92.6 | 85.9 | 18.9 | 5.6 |
| Primary 3 | 207 | 37.6 | 72.0 | 15.3 | 64.0 | 93.7 | 90.7 | 27.4 | 8.3 |
| | | *** | *** | *** | *** | ** | *** | *** | *** |

** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

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## *Results and Discussion*

This paper presents the cross-sectional data because the longitudinal aspects of the study have not been completed. An examination of the data collected at the 3 test stages reveals similar trends, and provided strong confirmation of the conclusions presented in this paper. For discussion purposes, data from Stage 3 will be presented.

### *General findings*

Table 2 reveals a range of scores on all the tests administered to the children at the 3 primary class levels. This range of scores which reflect heterogeneity of progress levels is also found within each primary class level (see Tables 3-9).

Although the research team did not systematically test prereading skills, it observed that the poor readers, especially from Primary 1, lacked these pre-reading skills or concepts about print (Clay, 1979b). These poor readers were also observed to lack skills necessary for instruction in word-attack skills, including those using letter-sound relationships, word parts or structural analysis, grammatical structure or syntax clues and contextual meaning.

Table 3: Average percentages of words read accurately on Familiar and Unfamiliar texts

| Progress Groups | Primary 1 | | Primary 2 | | Primary 3 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Familiar texts | Unfamiliar texts | Familiar texts | Unfamiliar texts | Familiar texts | Unfamiliar texts |
| High | 97.4 | 92.0 | 98.2 | 97.2 | 98.7 | 98.1 |
| High Average | 94.7 | 74.2 | 96.6 | 91.1 | 97.2 | 95.4 |
| Low Average | 90.0 | 63.2 | 94.2 | 88.8 | 94.4 | 92.4 |
| Low | 70.8 | 38.7 | 81.3 | 66.6 | 84.5 | 77.1 |
| | *** | *** | *** | *** | *** | *** |
| Whole group | 88.2 | 67.0 | 92.6 | 85.9 | 93.7 | 90.8 |

*** $P < 0.001$

Table 4: Average scores on the Burt Word Test

| Progress Groups | Primary 1 | Primary 2 | Primary 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| High | 25.5 | 40.4 | 51.7 |
| High Average | 10.6 | 30.7 | 38.7 |
| Low Average | 5.8 | 26.3 | 34.0 |
| Low | 1.3 | 17.3 | 26.1 |
| | *** | *** | *** |
| Whole group | 10.8 | 28.7 | 37.6 |

*** $p < 0.001$

Table 5: Average raw scores on the Diagnostic Decoding Inventory

| Progress Groups | Primary 1 | Primary 2 | Primary 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| High | 51.3 | 93.0 | 115.7 |
| High Average | 13.3 | 51.8 | 81.7 |
| Low Average | 8.2 | 37.9 | 60.2 |
| Low | 3.2 | 23.4 | 30.7 |
| | *** | *** | *** |
| Whole group | 19.0 | 51.5 | 72.1 |

*** $p < 0.001$

Table 6: Average raw scores on the Record of Oral Language

| Progress Groups | Primary 1 | Primary 2 | Primary 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| High | 13.3 | 23.0 | 22.7 |
| High Average | 6.2 | 14.2 | 16.3 |
| Low Average | 4.9 | 10.3 | 13.6 |
| Low | 3.5 | 7.6 | 8.9 |
| | *** | *** | *** |
| Whole group | 6.9 | 13.8 | 15.3 |

*** $p < 0.001$

Table 7: Average raw scores on the Writing Vocabulary Test

| Progress Groups | Primary 1 | Primary 2 | Primary 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| High | 39.3 | 58.4 | 77.8 |
| High Average | 30.7 | 48.9 | 69.8 |
| Low Average | 24.9 | 43.5 | 63.5 |
| Low | 15.2 | 31.4 | 45.1 |
| | *** | *** | *** |
| Whole group | 27.5 | 45.5 | 64.0 |

*** $p < 0.001$

Table 8: Average raw scores for accuracy on the Neale Test

| Progress Groups | Primary 1 | Primary 2 | Primary 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| High | 17.2 | 32.8 | 43.4 |
| High Average | 4.9 | 19.5 | 28.7 |
| Low Average | 1.5 | 14.3 | 23.4 |
| Low | 0.2 | 9.0 | 14.1 |
| | *** | *** | *** |
| Whole group | 5.9 | 18.9 | 27.4 |

*** $p < 0.001$

Table 9: Average raw scores for comprehension on the Neale Test

| Progress Groups | Primary 1 | Primary 2 | Primary 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| High | 5.2 | 10.6 | 13.7 |
| High Average | 1.3 | 5.9 | 8.9 |
| Low Average | 0.8 | 4.2 | 7.1 |
| Low | 0.4 | 2.0 | 3.6 |
| | *** | *** | *** |
| Whole group | 1.9 | 5.6 | 8.3 |

*** $p < 0.001$

*Data from the running records*

One quarter of the children in Primary 1, 2 and 3 are reading their classroom texts at the Frustration level; i.e., with less than 90% accuracy (see Table 3). These are passages the teacher has recently taught the children to read in class. This is not a desirable situation because Cooper in a classic 1952 study of children in grades 2 through 6, found that the easier the reader was for the child, the more progress the child made during the year (see Harris, 1979). This generalization holds for both sexes and for ability levels ranging from above to below average children. Various other researchers agree that learning is most efficient on instructional material that is easy enough to allow pupils not only to develop fluency and to enjoy reading but also to concentrate on new words and ideas (Harris, 1979). Therefore it is important for the teacher to procure a set of books that is well graded and suitable for the intended population.

Further support for the use of easy instructional material comes from the analysis of children's self correction behaviour while reading classroom texts. The results of this study support findings from other error-analysis studies (see Ng, 1979) that children self correct more on easier texts than on more difficult texts (see Table 10).

This is easily understood if it is remembered that the Unfamiliar texts are read with lower accuracy rates than the Familiar texts. In observational studies of children's behaviour, it was found that children were able on their own to detect and correct their errors. As a child corrects an error,

Table 10: Self correction rates of reading behaviour on Familiar and Unfamiliar texts

| Progress Groups | Primary 1 | | Primary 2 | | Primary 3 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Familiar texts | Unfamiliar texts | Familiar texts | Unfamiliar texts | Familiar texts | Unfamiliar texts |
| High | 0.21 | 0.10 | 0.19 | 0.21 | 0.23 | 0.12 |
| High Average | 0.14 | 0.01 | 0.15 | 0.13 | 0.16 | 0.08 |
| Low Average | 0.06 | 0.01 | 0.08 | 0.07 | 0.13 | 0.06 |
| Low | 0.06 | 0.01 | 0.10 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.04 |
| Whole group | 0.12 | 0.03 | 0.13 | 0.11 | 0.14 | 0.07 |

he may improve his understanding of the cue systems (e.g. graphic and contextual cues) available to him and the interrelationships between these systems in reading processes. The ability to detect errors and learn from self correction is a valuable asset to the child because of its potential as an important self-teaching strategy.

*Data from the reading-related tests*

Two important findings from the reading-related tests merit mention. The skills measured in the Diagnostic Decoding Inventory, the Record of Oral Language and Writing Vocabulary have been found to relate highly to reading progress. This relationship is also found in the present study. The better readers tend to score better on these reading-related tests (see Table 5-7). It is not unreasonable to assume that if effort is made to improve these skills, reading performance may also improve. The educational implications are further explored in sections below.

The Singaporean children's scores on these tests are understandably below the norms of children from English-speaking countries. A more interesting finding is that the Singaporean child's scores on the measure for Writing Vocabulary compares more favourably with overseas norms than his scores for the Record of Oral Language, the Burt Word test or the Neale test. Any reading programme embarked upon can use this strength of his writing skill to support his efforts in learning to read.

*The Neale test*

Tables 8 and 9 show the raw scores of the children on the Neale test. It can be seen that the average comprehension score is lower than that for reading accuracy. This provides evidence for the claim that the ability to read accurately does not guarantee comprehension of what is read.

While recognizing the importance of the role of decoding in reading accuracy, one should ensure that word identification strategies be learned in meaningful contexts because previous studies have also described our children's reading as "barking at print" (Heaton, 1979; Ng, 1980). Logically then, the strategy to adopt is one that teaches word identification skills within a meaningful context, so that our children will have in their listening and speaking vocabulary, words they will encounter in their reading.

This logical conclusion is supported by inference from further analyses of the data.

*Correlation and multiple regression analyses*

A correlation matrix was worked out for the different variables; reading accuracy on Neale test (Neale Acc), reading comprehension on Neale test (Neale Comp), the Diagnostic Decoding Inventory (DDI), the Record of Oral Language (ROL) and Writing Vocabulary (WVOC). The analysis indicates that the last 3 tests, the reading-related tests, are significantly intercorrelated (see Table11).

Table 12 shows that if reading accuracy is correlated with the 3 other variables, DDI (an indication of decoding ability) appears to have a higher correlation than ROL (an indication of control of oral language) or Writing

Table 11: Correlation matrix for the 3 test variables for the data collected at Primary 1, 2 and 3

| | Diagnostic Decoding Inventory | Record of Oral Language | Writing Vocabulary |
|---|---|---|---|
| Diagnostic Decoding Inventory | | 0.70 | 0.68 |
| Record of Oral Language | 0.70 | | 0.58 |
| Writing Vocabulary | 0.68 | 0.58 | |

N.B. All correlations are significant at the $p < 0.001$ level.

Table 12: Correlation indices for the 3 test variables for the data collected at Primary 1, 2 and 3

| | Diagnostic Decoding Inventory | Record of Oral Language | Writing Vocabulary |
|---|---|---|---|
| Neale Accuracy | 0.89 | 0.76 | 0.76 |
| Neale Comprehension | 0.75 | 0.79 | 0.69 |

N.B. All correlations are significant at the $p < 0.001$ level.

Vocabulary. On the other hand, if reading comprehension is correlated with these 3 variables, then ROL has the higher correlation. While the data indicates the importance of decoding to reading accuracy, it also suggests that a command of the syntax is just as important for comprehension of what is read.

Simple correlational analyses do not account for the contribution of the combination of variables. Therefore the data were subjected to a stepwise multiple regression analysis to determine at each step the contribution of 1, 2 or 3 variables in explaining the variation in reading accuracy and reading comprehension. These analyses were applied to the total group at the three primary levels and again separately at each of the progress levels. The general pattern emerges that when the 3 variables were included, 86% of the total variation in reading accounted for by the contribution of the 3 variables (see Tables 13 and 14). The additional contribution of each of the variables is significant at the $p < 0.15$ level.

The data strongly support a view that all these skills (decoding, oral language, writing) are interdependent and should not be neglected if reading success is to be assured. It does not support the exclusive emphasis of one skill at the expense of another at any of the Primary 1, 2 or 3 levels.

The linguistic analysis of the children's oral reading errors also shows a relationship between good readers and the ability to use decoding and oral language skills in attacking difficult words encountered in both familiar and unfamiliar texts. Therefore, our reading programme should include teaching strategies aimed at helping children use these reading-related skills in an integrated manner. This emphasis on an integrated system of reading

Table 13: Reading accuracy: stepwise multiple regression analysis for the data collected at Primary 1, 2 and 3

| Step | Variable | $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Diagnostic Decoding Inventory | 0.79 |
| 2 | Diagnostic Decoding Inventory, Writing Vocabulary | 0.84 |
| 3 | Diagnostic Decoding Inventory, Writing Vocabulary, Record of Oral Language | 0.86 |

Table 14: Reading comprehension: stepwise multiple regression analysis for the data collected at Primary 1, 2 and 3

| Step | Variable | $R^2$ |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Record of Oral Language | 0.63 |
| 2 | Record of Oral Language, Diagnostic Decoding Inventory | 0.71 |
| 3 | Record of Oral Language, Diagnostic Decoding Inventory, Writing Vocabulary | 0.74 |

behaviour is essential because it has been found that the good reader is distinguished from the poor reader in the way he builds the subskills into one single process so that the components of the process becomes mutually facilitating instead of a number of unintegrated, independent subskills (Guthrie, 1973). Teaching strategies therefore should focus on getting the child to use these subskills (e.g. decoding skills and oral language) in an integrated manner to cope with reading tasks in the classroom.

### *Reading Instructional Activities*

In addition to collecting data by testing children, a small classroom observation study was carried out in the 72 classes that these children were taught in. This study used an instrument (adapted from Duffy & Anderson, 1982) which measured the time given to the different instructional activities within a reading period and was supplemented by a teacher questionnaire on various aspects of reading instruction.

The evidence from this study shows that reading instruction is markedly similar to that found in an earlier exploratory study (Ng, 1980). The observational study and responses to the teacher questionnaire show that the most favoured techniques are the use of oral drill with flashcards and the chorus reading of basic reading texts. The skill most frequently promoted is isolated word recognition. This restricted range of instructional techniques seems inadequate for coping with the wide range in reading levels found at the 3 primary class levels, or for strengthening weaknesses presently found in our children's reading skills.

## *Educational Implications*

*Basic principles*

The Language Experience Approach to Reading (LEAR) is being recommended by the research team as either an instructional alternative or a supplement to the programmes being used currently in Singapore schools. This approach can provide a pre-reading programme, a foundation for word-attack skills, a gradual introduction of new English vocabulary as well as a whole class approach that also makes provisions for differences in ability. This approach is recommended not only because it is judged to facilitate reading acquisition but also because it may foster more positive attitudes towards learning and reading generally.

The team has recommended to authorities that should LEAR for some reason be judged to be unsuitable for our primary classrooms, the alternative approach decided on should embody the sound educational principles basic to learning and teaching found in LEAR but not adequately provided for in the present educational system.

(a) Motivation is of utmost importance in facilitating learning and in fostering positive attitudes towards future learning and reading. To keep motivation high therefore, learning tasks should be appropriate for the pupil's age and interest. More importantly, children should not be instructed on texts that are too difficult for them.

(b) The approach should be meaning based, emphasizing the important goal of understanding rather than imitating the language.

(c) To sustain interest, much more varied instructional aids and activities should be used.

(d) Reinforcement to facilitate learning should be provided through practice with integrated cross-curricular subject matter (e.g. English, Science, Mathematics) or by consistently integrating the practice of specific skills (e.g. reading, writing, listening and speaking activities) within the general subject area of English language teaching. Judgement has to be made on the units to be taught this way because not every learning unit lends itself easily to the integrated approach. The principle underlying this approach is one of reinforcement and practice not reliance on monotonous repetition.

(e) Any good programme should include the monitoring of progress of the child, obtaining continuous diagnostic information about the child's efforts in the various activities and use of this informa-

tion to determine follow-up lessons. Early detection of learning difficulties can prevent over-practice of incorrect responses while corrective teaching can help a child back on to the path of learning again.

Although LEAR is currently being tried out in a few classrooms in Singapore, it is anticipated that the change from order and drill to a more flexible programme may be too confusing a change for some teachers, especially for those who are not native speakers of English themselves. It may be possible as an interim measure for such teachers to use a similar approach that offers more structure but which embodies the essential elements of LEAR.

### *Recommendations*

If the principles outlined in the above section are accepted as being important to the teaching and learning of language, then some changes have to be made to certain aspects of our education system.

(a) The principle of integration demands that reading instruction time be integrated with language learning time. Therefore time-tables would have to be blocked for at least the English subjects.

(b) It would be necessary to review the present structural syllabus and devise a more functional one to help the teachers plan activities/experiences which would introduce first the English patterns that are most relevant and useful to the children.

(c) Careful attention should be paid to the readability levels of the children's present basal readers so that resequencing, addition of missing levels and a more gradual introduction of new vocabulary can be considered for future revisions of the materials.

(d) The textbook policy should be reviewed to shift the control of the children's textbooks from the parents to the teachers who with training will be able to match materials to abilities. Instead of buying individual sets of books for their own children, the parents could contribute to a book fund set up for the purpose of buying books for school use. Teachers then would be freer to choose the appropriate textbook from a central book supply according to their knowledge of each child's abilities.

(e) Many Singapore teachers need a retraining course in the newer approaches to the teaching of reading. Two levels of training would

be needed for different types of reading personnel required: a basic and general course for English language teachers and a more advanced and specialized course of reading advisors.

## *Concluding Comments*

The success of a programme does not end with the identification of problem areas and the suggestion of solutions. The dissemination phase is just as important.

> "If the dissemination phase of a curriculum development project is to be successful, it needs to be organized methodically on a large scale. It cannot be left to chance, laissez faire, or an expectation that teachers will eagerly research all new materials ... Probably at least as many resources need to be devoted to this phase as to the development of project phase, in terms of time, money and personnel."
>
> (Whitehead, 1980 Pg. 58)

The task of re-organizing the Singapore educational system in the lower primary schools and retraining reading teachers is a massive one. However the prospect of facilitating early reading acquisition makes it a worthwhile undertaking because early reading acquisition is substantially correlated with reading performance later in life (See Stanovich, Cunningham & Feeman, 1984). Once a child has learned to read, he can help himself learn the more difficult aspects of the language (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983), as long as his interest is fostered in reading programmes. The teaching of reading therefore is not a mere matter of teaching a child skills and information related to the decoding of print. The task is not fully nor successfully achieved if a child shows no interest in reading and seldom uses the skill. It is only when a child finds reading a source of information and pleasure that he has acquired a tool for future learning. These aims of reading education are precisely those embodied by approaches such as LEAR where teaching starts from where the child is, taking into account his interest and progress level, and leading him on to learning of skills which are essential to future learning.

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Chapter IV

# *Assessment of the Cloze Reading Technique in Placement Testing*

SIRIPORN LIMTRAKARN

The general aim of education in Thailand is to train a great number of highly qualified graduate students for a university system that is rapidly expanding to meet the demands of science and technology for faster modernization. For this, improved skills in the English language are needed.

The social, educational, cultural, and linguistic aspects of English reading in Thailand are as follows. The socio-political environment in which English language instruction occurs has direct impact on the shape of English instruction. Thai people are monolingual. Therefore, there is no English-speaking environment in Thailand.

In learning a foreign language, it is essential that the student has a sympathetic understanding of the cultural patterns of the target language. Thai students at the university level do not understand foreign cultures in the passages they read. Thai students may not be able to understand a given message in English because they are not acquainted with the meaning and usages of certain words that are used. They have problems with articles, tenses, and prepositions. Thailand today has a number of interrelated problems which look to education for a solution.

The purpose of this study is to examine the cloze reading technique to ascertain if it can be used as a placement test. Data for this study were gathered at King Mongkut's Institute of Technology, Ladkrabang, and at the Vocational College of Technology, Theves Campus, Bangkok. The test group was comprised of 200 students who are enrolled in the Faculty of Engineering, KMIT, and the Faculty of Engineering, Theves Campus. Two groups of students were given three cloze tests and the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) (excluding the listening section). The test group was then selected by a random sampling method.

The results of the students' performance on the four tests were analyzed with the following questions in mind.

1) Can the cloze tests adequately differentiate levels of proficiency of non-native speakers of English?
2) Do the cloze tests have adequate reliability and validity to be used for placement purposes?
3) Will a cloze test yield useful diagnostic information concerning problem areas for non-native speakers?

*Research of Cloze Tests and Second Language Proficiency: A Review*

The cloze procedure has been the subject of literally hundreds of research efforts over the past twenty-five years. Though originally conceived as an alternative measure of readability (Taylor, 1953, 1956), it has also come to be highly regarded as a measure of reading comprehension, and even as a measure of overall language proficiency. Cloze can most appropriately be described as a learner centered teaching and testing device in second-language situations, since it is thought to challenge the efficiency of the developing $L_2$ grammar of the student in a way that reflects natural language processes (Oller, 1973), rather than contrived pedagogy.

Darnell (1970) used a scoring method which depended on a previously determined distribution of response frequencies to each item as answered by native speakers. His techniques yielded high correlation (.83) with the TOEFL. Unfortunately, Darnell's scoring method, as he points out, cannot be used in ordinary classroom situations.

Oller (1973) likewise produced a study on the scoring methods of cloze testing. The subjects in the study consisted of 398 foreign students who took the UCLA ESL Placement Examination, Form A Revised. The three cloze tests were all scored by the exact word method and four other systems allowing varying degrees of credit for acceptable or partially acceptable responses. The score derived by the different scoring methods were correlated with the part scores and total score on the UCLA ESL Placement Examination Form 2A Revised. The data supported the conclusion that with non-native speakers the method of allowing any contextually acceptable response is significantly superior to the exact word scoring technique. The methods allowing partial credit for partly acceptable responses did not significantly improve test performance.

In one study (Oller & Inal, 1971), every other preposition was deleted from the passage of prose taken from a reader in English as a second language (ESL). Perhaps the most important finding was the utility of the cloze procedure as a diagnostic device for certain types of grammatical

problems. It was not particularly surprising that the highest correlation between the cloze test of preposition and the UCLA ESL Placement Examination was with the grammatical section. An overall correlation of .75 was achieved with the total score.

Cloze tests of second language proficiency have consistently correlated best with measures of listening comprehension (Darnell, 1970; Oller, 1973). This is surprising for two reasons. For one thing, phonology is supposedly an important factor in listening comprehension, though it should not be a significant factor in taking a cloze test. For another, it is frequently assumed that written tests allow unlimited time for processing whereas orally presented materials invoke short term memory constraints.

Porter (1978) did his study on cloze procedure. Two cloze tests were constructed which were identical except that in one test each deletion occurred one word earlier than in the other. Each test consisted of a literary and a non-literary passage, each with 50 blanks. The tests were administered to 39 Polish students, with three weeks elapsing between the first and the second test. Tests were scored by exact-word and acceptable-word methods, with significantly superior differentiation of ESL speakers being claimed for acceptable-word scoring (e.g., Oller, 1973). No strong correlation was found between performance on the first and the second test or on literary and non-literary passages, indicating that it cannot be assumed that any two cloze tests will yield equivalent results: blank-position and passage style may be important variables.

Jonz (1976) conducted a study on the M-C cloze. M-C stands for multiple-choice. The testing device upon which this study centers is, of course, a multiple-choice mutation of the basic cloze procedure. Briefly, the basic open-ended cloze reduces the redundancy inherent in language (written prose in the present case) by removing certain words, based on either a 'rational' or a 'random' process. The procedure becomes a testing device when that language, thus mutilated, is offered to the student with the instruction to replace the missing item. The M-C cloze adds the feature of allowing the student a limited range of choices with which to compare the responses he himself generates.

In Jonz' study, the thirty-three item M-C cloze procedure was administrated at the beginning of the Spring, 1976 term at a large university in the eastern United States. The test population is described as those students, thirty-three in number, who were entering that university's intensive English as a second program for the first time. Represented by the

Table 1: Correlation Between M-C Cloze and Placement Examination Subtests (N = 33)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| M-C Cloze and | Total Score[1] | = .66 (p<.001) |
| | Class Placement[2] | = .71 (p<.001) |
| | Structure[1] | = .70 (p<.001) |
| | Vocabulary[1] | = .54 (p<.01) |
| | Aural[1,3] | = .29 (ns) |
| | Reading[1] | = .61 (p<.001) |
| | Composition[1,4] | = .80 (p<.001) |

[1] Pearson Product-Moment

[2] Spearman Rho

[3] The Aural Section of the Placement Examination is unstable and is to be revised.

[4] N = 21;12 of the group did not write compositions.

test group are native speakers of a wide variety of languages: Spanish, Arabic, Korean, Hebrew, Vietnamese, Russian, and Portuguese. The M-C cloze was administered the day following the administration of the intensive English program's established placement examination. It took the slowest student less than twenty minutes to complete, whereas the placement examination took approximately three hours. Each placement examination, which includes a free composition section, a structure section, an aural section, a reading section, and a vocabulary section, takes approximately a half-hour to score by the staff of the intensive English program.

Table 1 displays the degree of relationship between the results of the M-C cloze and the subtest scores on the placement examination. The great majority of the correlations are significant beyond the p = .001 level, with the M-C X Vocabulary correlation reaching only the P = .01 level, and the M-C X Aural correlation being non-significant. What this basically means is that there is very little likelihood that the results (save the M-C X Aural) are simply a chance happenstance. With the exception of the Aural section, the M-C cloze and the three-hour placement examination appear to be measuring very similar things.

Though all of the correlations are important, two of them merit close attention: (1) that which exists between M-C cloze and Class Placement, and (2) that which exists between M-C cloze and Composition.

Table 2: A Hypothetical Placement Scheme Using M-C Cloze Raw Scores

| Placement | Raw Score |
|---|---|
| Level I | LESS THAN 11 CORRECT |
| Level II | 11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18 |
| Level III | 17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24 |
| Level IV | 23,24,25,26,27,28,29,30,31 |
| Level V | MORE THAN 31 CORRECT |

First, it should be remembered that the function of the placement examination is the categorization of enrollees into five predesignated instructional levels. Therefore, a correlation was derived between the placement category assigned on the basis of the placement examination and the rank order assigned by raw scores on the M-C cloze. Though the coefficient thus generated is both moderately high (.71) and statistically significant ($p<.001$), it is also important to see how that relationship would have translated into assignment to instructional levels had placement been done on the basis of the M-C cloze.

A hypothetical placement scheme is sketched in Table 2. A comparison of group assignments revealed that nine of the thirty-three assignments would have been different. Checking two weeks after the commencement of instruction, one finds that six of the nine turn out to have been inappropriately placed (according to teacher judgement) by the long placement examination; that is, they have either been moved to a different level or are tentatively remaining as (incorrectly) placed. Had they been placed by using M-C cloze scores, they would have been more appropriately placed. The remaining twenty-four students are appropriately placed by both instruments. Thus, had the very short M-C cloze been the preferred placement device used, thirty of the thirty-three students would be appropriately placed, leaving only three misplacements—around a ten percent error.

Secondly, one's attention is drawn to the strong relationship that exists between the M-C cloze score and the Composition score. Compositions on this examination are scored on a global impression basis by three judges who average their scores to yield a single rating.

*Method*

Four tests were administered to two hundred subjects. These tests are:

1) the TOEFL Test; 2) cloze, scientific passage; 3) cloze, non-scientific passage; 4) cloze, literary passage.

The TOEFL examination is a standardized test designed to measure a person's proficiency in English, and consists of five subtests: listening comprehension; English structure; vocabulary; reading comprehension; and a lecture followed by questions on its content.

For this study, the TOEFL Test consists of 4 sections: English structure; vocabulary; reading comprehension; and writing ability. The English Structure Section tests the examinees' knowledge of English grammar. Each grammar problem consists of a short conversation between two individuals, from which part of the conversation has been left out. The examinees must choose one word or phrase from the four possible ones given to complete the conversation correctly. There are 50 items for this section.

The TOEFL Vocabulary questions are of two types. The first requires the examinees to complete a sentence in which one word is represented by a blank space. The second type of vocabulary question used on the TOEFL asks the examinees to choose the word which is most nearly the same in meaning as the question word. There are 50 items for this section. The Reading Comprehension Section tests the ability of readers to understand what they have read. There are 25 items for this section.

The Writing Ability Section consists of 2 parts, Part A and Part B. In Part A the readers are expected to recognize mistakes in formal English. They will be given four choices, one of which is wrong, and they must mark the one wrong answer on their answer sheets. In Part B the readers' knowledge of writing style is tested. It is difficult, if not impossible, to formulate rules on style. There are 50 items for this section.

The "Cloze Test" is a test produced by deleting every $n^{th}$ word from the text, usually with 50 deletions.

Alderson (1978) stated that other procedures are possible and, indeed, used.

It seems particularly important to distinguish among tests produced by different procedures since evidence is accumulating that a different deletion procedure results in a measure of a different aspect of language skill (Oller & Inal, 1971; Rankin, 1957, 1974; the review in Alderson, 1978).

The term 'cloze procedure' is used in three different ways. The first and most general level of definition is 'the systematic deletion of words from text' where *systematic* remains undefined. The second definition takes the word *systematic* and divides it into two types of systems, either a ran-

dom (or, better, pseudo-random) deletion of words, or a rational deletion. A third definition, which is increasingly common in the literature, is the deletion of every fifth word from text.

The scoring of cloze tests can be carried out in various ways, and the procedure may still be referred to as a cloze procedure. The commonest way of scoring responses to a cloze test is to allow credit only for the restoration of the exact word deleted (mispelling apart).

*Procedure*

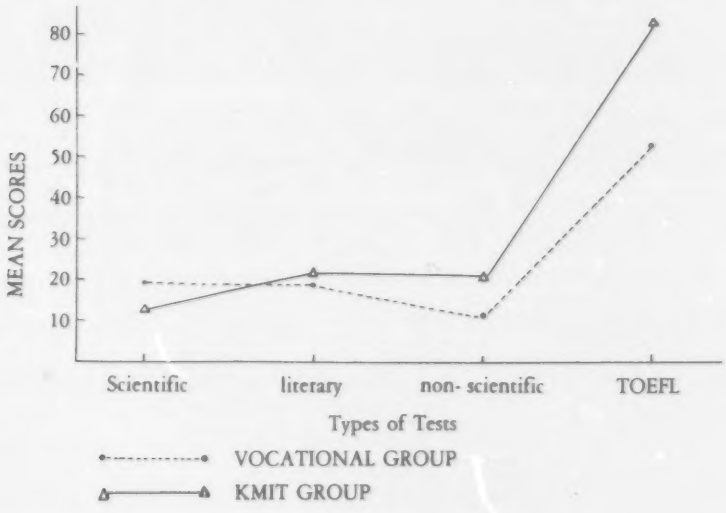
The TOEFL Test (excluding the listening section) was given to subjects who read the directions and answered the questions on a separate answer sheet.

Three cloze tests (scientific, non-scientific, and literary passages) were given to the subjects who wrote their answers on separate answer sheets. There are 50 blanks on each cloze passage. Every fifth word is deleted from each passage.

The answer sheets of the four tests were scored objectively by the researcher with a scoring key with the correct responses. Only one response was considered correct for each question, and each correct response got 1 point.

## *Results*

*Differences in levels of proficiency of the two groups*



*Question 1* : "Can the cloze tests adequately differentiate levels of proficiency of non-native speakers of English?"

This question could be answered by the preceding graph.

According to the graph, the mean scores of the two groups are obviously different.

The value of the mean scores of the Vocational Group on CLS, CLL, CLN, and TOEFL are 17.17, 18.47, 12.67, and 50.88 respectively. The value of the mean scores of the KMIT Group on CLS, CLL, CLN, and TOEFL are 15.98, 18.79, 18.13 and 74.75 respectively.

The evidence shows that the mean scores of the Vocational Group are slightly higher than those of the KMIT Group on the scientific passage. But the mean scores of the KMIT Group on the literary passage, non-scientific passage, and TOEFL are higher than those of the Vocational Group.

Converting the mean scores on the cloze passages into percentages, the researcher found that the mean scores of the Vocational Group on CLS, CLL and CLN are 34.34%, 36.93%, and 25.34% respectively. The mean scores of the KMIT Group on CLS, CLL, and CLN are 31.96%, 37.58%, and 36.26% respectively.

*Reliability of the cloze tests*

*Question 2* : "Do the cloze tests have adequate reliability and validity to be used for placement purposes?"

The reliability coefficient of cloze tests was computed by computer analysis. The researcher found that the reliability coefficient of cloze tests is .513. That is, the standardized item alpha is equal to .51278. The evidence is that the cloze technique can be used as a placement test. On the other hand, the mean scores of the subjects on the cloze literary passage is the highest of the three passages (18.64). Therefore, cloze tests (literary and scientific passages) can be used as a placement test. Table 3 shows

Table 3: Means and SDs of all Subjects

| VARIABLES | MEANS | SD | CASES |
|---|---|---|---|
| CLS | 16.540 | 8.327 | 187 |
| CLL | 18.636 | 6.962 | 187 |
| CLN | 15.562 | 9.417 | 187 |
| TOEFL | 63.513 | 21.984 | 187 |

the value of means and standard deviation of the subjects.

*Language problem analysis*

*Question 3* : "Will a cloze test yield useful diagnostic information concerning problem areas for non-native speakers?"

This question could be answered from the following Tables.

Table 5 concerns multiple regression analysis.

From Table 5, the value of $R^2$ (adjusted) for the CLS = −0.01. There-

Table 4: Means and SDs of Each Group

| VARIABLES | NUMBER OF CASES | MEAN | SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| CLS | | | |
| Vocational Group | 88 | 17.170 | 11.053 |
| KMIT Group | 99 | 15.980 | 4.742 |
| CLL | | | |
| Vocational Group | 88 | 18.466 | 9.706 |
| KMIT Group | 99 | 18.788 | 2.883 |
| CLN | | | |
| Vocational Group | 88 | 12.671 | 11.271 |
| KMIT Group | 99 | 18.131 | 6.433 |

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis

| Explanatory Variables | b | Beta | Standard Error of b | t | r |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | −0.342 | −.019 | 1.510 | .23 | −.064 |
| TOEFL | .114 | .028 | .035 | .33 | .018 |

(Multiple Regression Statistics)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| F(2,192) | = | 0.06 |
| $R^2$ | = | 0.0006 |
| $R^2$ (adjusted) | = | −0.010 |
| Standard error | = | 8.854 |

fore, 99 percent of the variation could not be explained. One reason is that the researcher did not measure important teacher variables such as personality, attitude towards the profession, and so on. Furthermore, the affective variables of the subjects such as motivation and attitude towards English learning were not measured.

The V value (coefficient of variation) could be obtained by dividing the value of standard deviation by the value of the mean score. That is, $V = SD/\overline{X}$, where V is the coefficient of variation, SD is the standard deviation, and $\overline{X}$ is the mean average score.

According to Table 4, the average score and standard deviation of the Vocational Group are 17.17 and 11.05 respectively. Therefore, the V value of the Vocational Group on CLS is equal to .64 ($V=\frac{11.05}{17.17}=.64$).The average score and standard deviation of the KMIT Group are 15.98 and 4.74 respectively. Therefore, the V value of the KMIT Group is equal to .30 ($V=\frac{4.74}{15.98}=.30$).

Table 6 concerns the multiple regression analysis of CLL Test.

From Table 6, the value of $R^2$ (adjusted) of the CLL = .04. Therefore, 96% of variation could not be explained.

For the CLL Test, the average score and standard deviation of the Vocational Group are 18.47 and 9.71 respectively. Therefore, the V value of the Vocational Group on CLL is equal to .53($V=\frac{9.71}{18.47}=.53$). The V value of the KMIT Group on CLL is equal to .15 ($V=\frac{2.83}{18.79}=.15$)

Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis

| Explanatory Variables | b | Beta | Standard Error of b | t | r |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | −.879 | −.060 | .236 | .711 | −.879 |
| TOEFL | .861 | .256 | .028 | 3.047 | .861 |
| (Multiple Regression Statistics) | | | | | |
| $F(2,190)$ | = | 5.271 | | | |
| $R^2$ | = | .053 | | | |
| $R^2$(adjusted) | = | .043 | | | |
| Standard error | = | 7.210 | | | |

Table 7: Multiple Regression Analysis

| Explanatory Variables | b | Beta | Standard Error of b | t | r |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | 3.815 | .200 | 1.515 | 2.517 | .330 |
| TOEFL | .104 | .239 | .035 | 3.007 | .347 |

(Multiple Regression Statistics)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| F(2,191) | = | 16.715 |
| $R^2$ | = | .149 |
| $R^2$ (adjusted) | = | .140 |
| Standard error | = | 8.864 |

Table 7 deals with multiple regression analysis on the CLN Test.

From Table 7, the value of $R^2$ (adjusted) of the CLN = .14. Therefore, 86 percent of variation could not be explained.

The average score and standard deviation of the Vocational Group on CLN are 12.67 and 11.27 respectively. Therefore, the V value of the Vocational Group is equal to .89. The average score and SD of the KMIT Group on CLN are 18.13 and 6.43 respectively. Therefore, the V value of the KMIT Group is equal to .35.

The V value of the Vocational Group on CLS, CLL and CLN is equal to .64, .53, and .89 respectively. The V value of the KMIT Group on CLS, CLL and CLN is equal to .30, .15, and .35 respectively. Therefore, the Vocational students displayed more variability of performance than those of the KMIT students.

## *Conclusions and Recommendations*

The findings of this study based upon our original criteria are as follows.

1) The researcher found that the cloze tests can adequately differentiate levels of proficiency of non-native speakers of English. The evidence is that the Vocational Group has a higher mean score on the technical passage than those of the KMIT Group. But the KMIT Group has a higher mean score on the general passage, the literary passage, and the TOEFL Test.

2) The researcher discovered that the reliability of the cloze tests is sufficiently high to be used as the placement test for students in both institutions and other similar ones.

3) A cloze test will yield useful diagnostic information concerning

problem areas for non-native speakers of English. The evidence is that V value of each group on the cloze tests is different from each other. The Vocational Group displayed more variability of performance than those of the KMIT students.

*Recommendations*

1) Language teachers should put more emphasis on general English for students at vocational institutes.

2) Cloze technical and literary passages can be used for the placement purposes.

3) Motivation is important in learning a foreign language. Therefore, teachers should motivate their students to learn English.

4) There should be sufficient time for English learning and teaching.

5) Teachers should teach listening and reading skills integratively.

6) Teachers should train their students to determine beforehand their goals or expectations for a given reading activity.

7) Teachers should teach their students to use reading strategies appropriate to the task at hand.

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Chapter V

# *Contextual Reading*

YOUNG JA LEE

## *Introduction*

College freshmen are normally required to take an elementary English reading course. It generally aims at enhancing their comprehension ability to meet the ever increasing demand for reading various books written in English. The textbook being used in a freshman English course contains mostly short essays and stories by renowned authors, all of which are regarded as appropriate for a college level reader.

The course proceeds in general with translation and a small amount of discussion on grammar. Unfortunately, there is a widespread notion that the course is merely an extension of an English class which students experienced previously in a high school. In fact, it is frequently heard that students find the course boring and worthless. To this investigator, it seems that such a trend has resulted from the failure to develop in students adequate reading skills to help them comprehend materials better so that they could appreciate quality literary pieces. Without improving students' comprehension ability, the course can never avoid the negative reputation it now has.

Since college students are to deal with various books written in English, let alone the textbooks required by numerous courses, they have to be prepared to effectively interact with those vast reading materials no later than at the college freshman level. As the problem of students' reading habits has been explicitly identified, suitable teaching methods have to be developed to solve them. A freshman English course should not in any way be neglected nor be allowed to remain as meager extension of a high school English course.

The major problem detected in students' reading habits is that they are not reading, but rather analyzing each sentence recklessly. Their partial reading limited to a sentence-level deciphering results at times in their total unawareness of context. With a keen attention being paid to the interrelatedness among sentences, each sentence should be approached in-

tegratively in context, which will eventually lead to the grasping of material in terms of context as well as specific content. The other problem associated with freshman English is that effective teaching methods have not been extensively tended to, though the need has been strongly felt by the majority of educators involved in the field.

Though it was by no means an extensive one, an experiment was carried out to pin down the specific problems repeatedly observed in the classroom and to suggest the appropriate directions for teaching. The experiment was attempted as a pilot study towards further research in identifying the problem encountered in freshman English as well as for developing improved teaching methods. It is clear that in order to improve students' comprehension ability, it is important to reevaluate reading habits which students have already formed through six or seven years of a high school level training.

However, the previous training was in no way undervalued by the investigator; it can serve as a necessary basis grasping the basic knowledge of English (in the matter of grammar, vocabulary and so on). With that foundation, the investigator strongly believes that if students are stimulated in the right direction, their comprehension skill will greatly improve, getting eventually eliminating the generally held unfortunate notion that freshman English does not help students in their reading which is, of course, supposed to involve comprehension.

This study, then, identifies some of those problems students bring from a previous training provided that those were somehow unavoidable in the first stage of learning a second language and suggests some teaching methods to advance a student's overall comprehension skill.

### *General Observation*

When students are asked to read some English material, it is almost always the case that they get involved in a heavy deciphering; they tackle each sentence by mobilizing all the so-called grammatical knowledge they have accumulated so far. Their first priority in reading is not the comprehension of a given material as a whole but the deciphering of each sentence in it; they decipher a sentence in a grammatically seeming way whether it makes sense or not. They do not pay much attention to what is written, what the author is trying to convey in that material. Sometimes, it is extremely doubtful whether they are aware of what they are saying when asked to interpret sentences. When they interact with a material,

they seem oblivious to context.

The grammatical knowledge along with vocabulary which students have acquired before coming to a college no doubt will serve as basic foundation for reading a college material. However what students have to realize, or, rather, what educators have to help them to realize is that grammar is only a tool to understand the structure of a sentence; their main concern now should be to comprehend a sentence with that tool and not merely to analyze a sentence with it for the sake of analysis, simply by brushing up in the knowledge of grammar or the application of it. They are usually so deeply involved in a heavy deciphering of each sentence that even if their interpretation is incompatible with the context, they are unable to recognize it.

When a sentence is relatively easy in its structure, uses familiar words and so on, there is of course generally no problem comprehending it. However, the more difficult the sentence gets, the heavier their deciphering. They isolate the sentence from the entire context and struggle to do their ever familiar deciphering job in spite of the obvious fact that in order to comprehend the problem sentence, they have to pay much more attention to the whole context while analyzing the structure of a sentence using their grammatical knowledge. Accordingly, the resulting interpretation is incompatible, totally disconnected from the entire context, and often ignoring the author's gist. When they read a sentence, it is obvious that they are not trained to seek a clue, or even to make a guess from the context.

Facing a material written in a mother tongue, one reads it on the basis of an internalized grammatical knowledge which a reader is mostly unconscious of. Thus one rather naturally approaches a material in a holistic fashion paying attention to the whole context along with doing a lot of guess work. However, when it comes to a material written in a foreign tongue, one is headlong in deciphering a sentence in isolation. Putting it bluntly, one is all busy concentrating on analyzing a sentence by applying an ever so consciously acquired grammatical knowledge of the foreign tongue. In order to read a foreign material daringly as if one were reading the materials written in a mother tongue, one's brain has to work much more diligently in a holistic fashion since one has to deliberately analyze the structure of a sentence while trying to get the meaning of the sentence in the light of the whole.

When students find a certain sentence difficult to interpret even after consulting a dictionary they usually do not go on reading; or, rather, they

do not want to go on reading before they analyze it somehow with their already available grammatical knowledge or until they have to give up after spending lots of time on that sole sentence.

In order to stimulate students' sensitivities to the overall context of a reading material, the investigator usually asks them to read a title very carefully before jumping into reading the first sentence of a material along with the author's name; they are to guess what this story is about. They are then asked to read the whole material again until the general idea of the material (for example, what the author is trying to say) strikes them however tentative and rough it may be. While going through the above phase, the students are supposed to familiarize themselves with each sentence not as an isolated entity but as one embodied in the context. In such a holistic approach, it is certainly conceivable that a sentence which is otherwise unintelligible can be comprehensible. It is derivable from our common experience that we understand a certain sentence much more clearly when considered within a given context.

### *Experiment and Results*

Based on the aforementioned general observation on students' reading habits, a simple experiment was conducted in order to perhaps substantiate it. The subjects were all college freshmen who were taking an elementary English course. Two classes were chosen. One class (Group A) was asked to read a certain paragraph (Appendix I) and to translate it. And the other class (Group B) was asked not only to translate it but also to state the gist. The second test was then given only to Group A, in which they were asked to translate the paragraph and to state the gist. Since the content or gist of that paragraph was so repetitively emphasized by the author that both groups scored one hundred percent accuracy in stating it.

The investigator's concern was mainly focused on students' comprehension difficulties resulting from their insensitivity to the material as a whole when they tackle each sentence. And the interesting result was brought about in the translation part. When being asked to give only a translation on Test 1, Group A scored only sixty-two point five percent accuracy in the matter of interpretation. But being asked to do translation as well as stating the gist on Test 2, the accuracy rate increased up to eighty-five percent (Appendix II). That clearly indicates that by paying attention to the material as a whole, that is, following the context carefully, their comprehension improved. Another interesting point shown in the results is

that Group B, who were asked to do translation and state the gist in the first place, scored the same as Group A's second test; their accuracy rate was also eighty-five percent (Appendix II).

Since the sentences in the paragraph are relatively easy to interpret, one sentence stood out as a problem for both groups, which was italicized in Appendix I. So on Group A's second test, the investigator concentrated on how students who made a wrong interpretation on the first test tackle that specific sentence when required to state the gist. Of course, this was only a small, informal experiment, but the implication seems to be significant substantiating the investigator's observation. The result specifically showed students' insensitivities to the whole context when they tackle a sentence. Most of the students who failed to interpret the sentence correctly on the first test read it as "People in East do not work hard so that they can not enjoy simple things in life"; as can be clearly seen in the paragraph (Appendix I), that is totally incompatible with the context. They were not simply aware of the fact that their interpretation conflicts with the context or rather other neighboring sentences until they were asked to pay attention to the gist by carefully tending to context.

Besides this specific test designed to test students' insensitivities to context, it is found again and again in classes that they usually translate each sentence quite independent of other neighboring sentences; they are not accustomed to follow the context. In many cases, they do not know what is being said in the material as a whole. So it is an interesting fact that when students are specifically asked to write the content of a material along with the translation of it, they can generate the proper meaning of a sentence in the view of the whole context. Along with the problem of their insensitivities to the context, it is shown that they are quite narrow-minded about the structure of a sentence; rather than trying to understand the problem sentence in the context, they try to somehow wring the meaning out of it by juggling the approximate knowledge they have on the structure, which only results in an incompatible interpretation with the context.

The basic grammar will give students a basic foundation to handle English material. But the vast contact with the English reading materials requires that they have to get accustomed to the various structures with a very open mind. They have to carefully pay attention to the structure of a sentence without ever losing the touch with the context. In the case of a difficult sentence, it clearly shows up in numerous quizzes done in the classroom that students are translating it by a heavy deciphering total-

ly out of the context. They have to face each sentence in such a way as to figure out how the author's intention is conveyed through a certain structure. If students are paying attention to the whole context, if they try to grasp the content, the comprehension of an individual sentence becomes easier and the structure of each sentence can be approached with a much more open-mindedness.

### *Teaching Methods*

It is a real challenge to stimulate such a rigid context-insensitive reader to become context-sensitive. Encouraging students to pay attention to the whole context is of course important since the ultimate aim of reading is to comprehend material, not to end up deciphering individual sentences. Since students have already studied English through a sentence-level approach for six or seven years before they come to college, it is very difficult to change their reading habit. Before dealing with material in the classroom, it is thus helpful to ask students to write the answers to the questions designed to test the comprehension of certain information in the material, the content, and so on, so that when students read the material in preparation for class, they do not just rashly read each sentence without paying attention to what each sentence really means in the light of the whole. And it is also very helpful to point out to students how a problem sentence can be approached by integrating it into the context. Then it is also important to explain how it is delivered through a target language; that is, the structure of a sentence should be explicitly examined.

As one cause of the student's failure to comprehend an English piece, the investigator picked out their lack of sensitivity to the context. When quizzes are done in the classroom which consist of translation and comprehension, students are allowed to use a dictionary as much as they want. But they do not often succeed in comprehending the sentences. At times, their translations sound all right but they completely fail to answer the comprehension questions. As pointed out in many reading research works, there are various reasons for the difficulty of comprehension including a reader's personal background (for example, world knowledge). But what the investigator pinned down in the experiment is one of their specific problems, that is, context insensitivity which hinders their reading which is otherwise successful. In reading the material in a mother tongue, the matter of being sensitive to the context is naturally achieved since one is not deliberately analyzing the sentence in isolation. One faces each

sentence in the close relation with other sentences which together contribute to the context organization for the content to be clearly understood. Based on the internalized grammar of a mother tongue, one almost unconsciously reads each sentence in such an interrelated manner. One is reading the material to understand it without necessarily thinking one has to analyze the sentences laboriously.

A sentence-level approach leads to another tendency in which students think that they do not understand a sentence due to some unknown words. Of course, it is possible to detect the meaning of a sentence after consulting the dictionary for some unknown words. No one will deny that vocabulary knowledge is significant along with various grammatical knowledges. However, their word-centered approach leads dangerously to a rigid habit with which students cannot see the structure of a sentence as a whole. Because their attention is so much limited to an individual word it is likely that they fail to grasp the overall structure of a sentence. They somehow try to figure out the meaning of a sentence solely based on the separate knowledge of an individual word without daring to grasp the whole structure of a sentence. Therefore, though the basically same structures are used again and again, whenever they face a new sentence, it is a new structure to them even if it is only a slightly accomodated version.

Students in the investigator's class are usually asked to analyze a sentence in big structural chunks before they try to look into a dictionary for the meaning of an individual word. As English has its own structural devices (for example, word order), students should be trained to make themselves acquainted with those structural marking devices and be able to recognize the structure as a whole while figuring out what the sentence means on the basis of context. Of course, in order to train students to be sensitive to the structural marking devices, the educator should be able to effectively analyze a sentence in such a way that students can see clearly how the sentence is structured, what kind of structural marks are used. (The study on the effective method to explain the structure of a sentence will be dealt with in a separate work by the investigator.)

After analyzing a sentence in big structural chunks, students are allowed to use a dictionary to check the words which they do not know or cannot guess even from the context. It is usually the case that students do not grasp the structure of a sentence not because they do not know some individual words, but because they are not sensitive to the structural marks which will help them to analyze the sentence. And with regard to mean-

ing, in the case of seldom used words, it is relatively easy to pick the proper meaning by consulting a dictionary. But when it comes to a commonly used word, it is much more difficult to choose the suitable meaning unless they are paying attention to the context. A word may have a tremendously wide range of use and yield many different shades of meanings.

A grammatical or structural knowledge sometimes will not help to understand a certain sentence. Students should be trained to follow the context and not to lose the flow of idea intended by the author. The interpretation of a sentence should make sense, that is, should be compatible with the preceding as well as the following sentences. Students should be careful not to make any contradictory or unintelligible interpretation, which is usually the result of a partial reading. Being stuck on an individual sentence, students are likely to make up the meaning of a sentence conglomerating the meanings of individual words. It is thus strongly recommended that we attempt to train students to interpret each sentence in the light of a context while clearly grasping the structural organization of a sentence.

## *Concluding Remarks*

In this study, the investigator tried to explore the general tendency in the reading habits of college freshmen due to their sentence-level, word centered approach that they carry over from their early training. The specific problem was pinned down and a possible remedial teaching method was accordingly suggested from an experiment.

When students interact with some English language material, they do not try to comprehend it. Rather they try to analyze each sentence with their grammatical knowledge that they have acquired so far and put it into Korean without really trying to understand its meaning. In many cases, they do not care how sentences sum up to organize a whole. Therefore, unless they are specifically asked to concentrate on the content of a material carefully following the context, they do not approach a material holistically. They are generally insensitive to the context of a reading material; they do not follow the flow of ideas, so to speak, intended by the author. And when they analyze a sentence, they do not see the overall structure. They rather hastily look into a dictionary for the words of which they do not know the meanings. They then try to jumble them into a seeming interpretation without really grasping the structure of a sentence as a whole.

In order to change their reading habits to enhance an overall comprehen-

ion ability, some directions in teaching methods are suggested. On a sentence level, students have to be trained to familiarize themselves with English structure as a whole. And they have to read each sentence in the light of the context. It should be emphasized that they pay attention to what the writer is trying to convey in the material, what the gist is, and so on. For that matter, in order to train students to be sensitive to the whole context as well as to see the overall structure of an English sentence, they have to be asked often to write the gist, summary, or to comment on whatever is relevant to the important ideas in the material. The structural organization of a sentence should be focally examined to help them grasp it readily.

Through the experiment conducted by the investigator, a specific problem is identified. Improvement is attainable through the right teaching method. This study is small in scale and somewhat informal in nature, but the practical implication is important. In order for a college freshman English course to have a real value in helping students comprehend English language material better, this kind of experiment should be performed extensively by those who are actually involved in teaching.

Therefore, if a continuous research is done in this direction, freshman English courses may be greatly improved.

# *Appendix I*

*Test Material*

Then where did this myth about the spiritual East and the material West come from? It has its roots in a sort of truth, and this truth can be simply stated: people in the East like to enjoy life. *They will not work so hard that they have no time for simple pleasure in living, in eating, in sleeping, in playing with their children, and in talking with their wives and families.** They will not take on two jobs if they can pay their bills with one, for two jobs consume their time and distract their minds. They do not want to think constantly about work. But they are not in the least lazy. They put an enormous amount of energy into their skills and pastimes. But to work merely to earn more money than they need is, to them, not sensible. They are ambitious but not, most of all, for money. All that they want cannot be bought with money. Peace cannot be bought with money and fun cannot be bought with money, nor laughter, nor time to smoke and drink tea, nor time to make flower gardens and write poetry or to walk on the hills carrying a bird cage.

(from "East and West" by Pearl S. Buck)

* The italicized part caused a comprehension difficulty in both groups. Except this specific sentence, students did a fair job in translating the sentences as well as stating the gist.

# *Appendix II*

*Test Results*

— Group A —

Test 1

Subjects : College Freshmen (40 students)
Translation was asked.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Translation | correct : 25 | (62.5%) |
| | incorrect : 15 | (37.5%) |

Test 2

Subjects : same as above (39* students)
Translation and gist were asked.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Translation | correct : 33 | (85%) |
| | incorrect : 6 | (15%) |
| Gist | correct : 39 | (100%) |

— Group B —

Subjects : College Freshmen (60 students)
Translation and gist were asked.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Translation | correct : 51 | (85%) |
| | incorrect : 9 | (15%) |
| Gist | correct : 60 | (100%) |

* The one who made an incorrect interpretation on Test 1 did not take Test 2.

# PART THREE

Chapter VI

# *Reading-based Intensive Course in English for Foreign Students*

LOURDES M. DIAZ

## *Introduction*

The English language was formally introduced in the Philippines by the Americans in 1898. On September 1, 1898, two weeks after the occupation of Manila by the American Army, General Meritt ordered the reopening of city schools (Usero, 1935). That started the formal learning of the English language by the Filipinos.

After the American army opened the schools and started the teaching of English, along with other subjects, to Filipinos, small groups of American teachers came over to help. The large group, however, arrived in August, 1901, aboard the transport, Thomas. The group, consisting of 517 teachers, recommended by different universities in the United States, were known as the Thomasites. Their arrival marked a new era for the Philippines.

The period from 1898 to 1924 was devoted to the study and mastery of the English grammar for the first Filipinos trained to teach. They would later run the newly started Philippine educational system with English as the medium of instruction. From then on, the growth of the Filipino in the English language has been phenomenal. Today, the Philippines can boast of its readers, speakers, and writers in the English language.

Proficiency in the four communication areas—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—in the language of instruction is a very important factor for the students' survival and success in school work. Believing in this and cognizant of the fact that most of the foreign students who seek admission in Centro Escolar University are non-speakers of English, and, therefore, do not possess these skills in the English language, the University Reading Department designed and established a comprehensive and intensive Reading-based English language skills program embodied in a sequentially structured course, *Reading-Based Intensive Course in English for Foreign Students,* levels one, two, three, and four.

*Selection of students*

The Foreign Student Section of the Office of the Registrar takes care of the processing of the papers of the foreign students seeking admission to the different colleges in the University. A foreign student, therefore, referred by the University Registrar, comes to the Reading Center where he is given the Reading Placement Tests. The instrument used is the Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests suited to his particular level. If and when necessary, the Dolch 220 Basic Sight Word Test and other tests constructed and item-analyzed by the Reading Department, are likewise administered to the student for a more comprehensive diagnosis.

The foreign student is then referred to the Guidance and Testing Center for the IQ and the personality tests. After he has taken all these tests, and when the results of the tests are ready, the student is asked to come for an interview with the Head of the Reading Department. During this interview, he is informed of the results of the tests he has taken. With the results of the tests and the interview combined, the student is advised whether or not there is a need for him to go into intensive training in the language of instruction, which is English. If there is a need for him to take the Reading-Based Intensive Course in English, he is informed of his placement.

*Faculty/staff preparation*

One of the primary responsibilities of an intensive training program and those concerned with implementing the program is making sure that the faculty and staff are qualified and adequately prepared to handle the course and to implement the program. Aside from academic degrees, in-service training activities like seminar-workshops, micro-teaching sessions, lecture-demonstrations, conferences, etc., in relation to teaching strategies the teachers handling this course should also be aware of the foreign students' cultures, socio-linguistic factors, affecting their learning environment, and the systems of their languages.

In view of this, the teachers assigned to teach this course to foreign students were chosen carefully based on their qualifications. For the purpose of this lecture, letters are used instead of their names.

## *Class Organization*

After the students have been classified and teachers have been chosen and assigned, the next step is to decide on class (group) organization. In

this connection, several questions have to be answered:

1. What is the maximum number of students in each group or class?
2. Will instruction be given individually, in small groups, or a combination of these class organizations?
3. How many hours a week should be allotted since the 52.5 hour requirement for a semester should be complied with?

The answers to these questions and the decisions made, of course, depend in large part, on how much time the staff is prepared to devote and the administration's willingness to experiment with flexible grouping.

In this particular case, after consultations with the academic and the finance committees, the following answers and decisions were arrived at:

1. The maximum number of students allowed in each group is 8.
2. As much as possible, group instruction shall be given. If and when necessary, individualized, or personalized, instruction should be given within the group to ensure effective teaching—learning results.
3. The instruction shall be carried out for 3 hours a week—3 sessions of 1 hour each or 2 sessions of 1½ hours each; at times, however, for valid reason, or for 3 hours straight.

### *The Instructional Program*

In any academic program, especially in a skill-oriented program the next and perhaps the most important step is to plan the instructional program. Planning takes into consideration the ultimate goal of the program. A very clear view of this is very necessary so that specific and immediate objectives can be set up to attain this final goal.

The main goal of this program is to make non-English speaking foreign students attain fluency in the use of the English language, not only for academic purposes, but for social and/or business interactions as well. Believing that language is a holistic process and that reading, as one of its expressions "...is intricately affected by and, in turn, affects other linguistic expressions" (Atwell, 1983), the CEU Reading Department designed a program that trains the foreign student in the four communication skills—reading, writing, speaking and listening. Since the program is reading-based, instruction is directed in such a way that what is learned through reading is used to support and enhance the foreign student's "growth and expression in each of the other modes" (Atwell, 1983).

### *Bringing Together the Four Communication Areas with Reading as Base*

Integration of four areas and transition from one to the other can be smoothly and effectively done. There are strategies and activities involving reading, writing, speaking, and/or listening.

*Reading and writing*

Reading and writing are two modes of the language that closely go together in relation to the student's activities connected with his studies. When he reads his lessons or does his homework, he interacts with the authors of his books. Therefore, there is communication—one that is done through reading and writing. In this connection, Watson (1983) states that "reading and writing have to do with meaning and with people—their languages, their intentions, their expectations, and the situations in which they find themselves." A student, therefore, who is trained in reading and writing skills in English becomes an easy receiver and producer of meaningful messages in the English language.

The presentation of the language communication skills given earlier in this paper shows the transition from the reading activities to the writing lessons and how one activity is used to develop a specific skill in the other. One specific example of this activity is reading a selection or a chapter from a textbook, then writing down notes (main ideas and supporting details). These notes are later used in writing a composition with particular attention given to spelling, grammar, and paragraph organization. Thus, there is a smooth transition from reading to writing while at the same time doing interdisciplinary integration.

Here are other suggested activities for the purpose (Seminoff, 1983):

1. Book ladder which provides a list of books at various levels of reading or conceptual difficulty
2. Descriptive writing of feelings caused by specific situations
3. Guided reading of a selection prior to discussion in small groups or to oral prediction in a class setting
4. Note-taking from lectures, speakers, or taped commentary
5. Uninterrupted sustained silent reading of materials dealing with coping
6. Sustained writing on an assigned or self-selected topic
7. Writing a composition which illustrates some aspect of coping with a situation

8. Writing letters to request information from agencies or institutions which provide specific service related to coping (e.g., social services, mental health clinic, local court system)
9. Writing dialogue to illustrate how misunderstandings arise and how they can be solved
10. Written questions which provide opportunity for the exploration of meaning(s) in the assigned selections

It is clearly shown here that reading is a receptive process of the language, while writing is expressive. In the process of reading the individual receives information and fulfills his expectations. In writing, he expresses what he has read and makes known his intentions. In short, encoding and decoding processes come into play.

*Reading and listening*

Reading and listening are both receptive processes of the language. When a person reads a selection or listens to a talk, a lecture, or a recording he receives information and fulfills his expectations. Furthermore, in both processes, the reader or listener is trying to understand what someone is saying—whether spoken out loud or written on paper.

In this particular program, the teacher sees to it that the foreign student is taught and made to understand very clearly the reading formula, SQR, and the listening formula, TQLR, and how these two are closely related (Parker, 1969). The exercises used in this particular aspect of the program range from taped lessons to the actual/real voices of Filipino teachers to which the foreign students are exposed during their stay in the University. Likewise, parallel selections taken from books, newspapers, and magazines are given to them so the patterns of thinking they use in listening and reading are similar.

*Reading and speaking*

When a person reads, he gathers and takes in information. When he speaks, he gives out information. When he discusses with others what he has read he develops his two-way communication skills.

As part of the holistic approach in the teaching of English to foreign students, the program is enriched with activities that provide the student with reading and speaking skills. These oral discussion activities are usually done in dyads, triads, quadrants, or bigger groups.

## *Evaluating Performance*

In reading, as in other academic or educational programs, evaluation plays an important role. Progress in the acquisition and development of target skills and abilities should be measured periodically, formally and/or informally.

In the particular program discussed in this paper, student progress is measured both formally and informally. The activities provide for immediate evaluation and feedback at the end of each class session, and another informal periodical testing done three times during the semester. The final evaluation at the end of the semester is done, likewise, formally and informally.

### *Informal evaluation*

The feedback provided by the immediate evaluation at the end of each class session is used to help the students improve their skills in the four communication areas. Such evaluation takes into consideration both the process and the product of communication since "effective communication depends upon both the receiver and the sender. The sender must construct a message approriate for the receiver, but it is the receiver who makes the final judgments as to the effectiveness of the communication" (Ammon, 1983).

It is worthwhile to note that the planners and the implementors of this program do not just focus upon the mechanical aspects of the activities—workbook exercises, work sheets, and taped lessons, and/or results of standardized tests. Provisions are made for evaluating whole and real communication activities. One example is as follows:

The students are given a selection to read silently. At the end, they answer objective type questions that take care of the students' grasp of main ideas and supporting details, their ability to make conclusions and inferences, to note relationships, and their skill in making critical analysis of events and situations in the selections. This written test is immediately corrected and feedback is given right away. This is then followed by an oral discussion in which a student interacts with his fellow students and his teacher and, at the same time, sharpens his analytic abilities. This oral discussion is again followed by written reactions to the selection read and orally discussed. The composition/reaction paper that follows takes into consideration thought organization, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, and the other aspects of written communication. The students then exchange,

read, and react to each other's compositions.

The informal evaluative material is not only a selection to be read. Sometimes a taped selection, an oral report from one of the students, or a teacher's lecture is used for the purpose. Whatever informal evaluative material is used—be it a selection to read, a story or composition to write, a tape recording, a report or a lecture to listen to, or a topic to discuss, all the four expressions of language are evaluated, and meaningfully so, by the alert and skillful teachers who understand the holistic nature of language.

*Formal evaluation*

The formal evaluation at the end of the semester or after five months of instruction, though inadequate, is also worth noting. The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Tests, Survey E for college students and Survey F for degree holders are used.

The results of the aforementioned informal evaluation and the results of formal testing using a standardized test, and the final interview with the Head of the Reading Department are used as bases for determining whether or not the foreign student is ready to take additional subject load in the particular course he has chosen in the University.

## *Description of Performance*

The following is a description of the foreign students' performance after one semester of training in the program, as measured both formally and informally.

*Performance in reading as measured by the Gates-MacGinitie reading tests*

The 22 foreign students (Thai, Korean, Japanese, Iraqi, Malaysian, and Taiwanese) were given the pre-test at the start of the semester and a post-test at the end. An examination of the pre-test and post-test scores shows gains ranging from 1.5 to 7.6 in reading grade scores. The average, gain is 3.5. Considering that the training period was only five months, which is equivalent to 52.5 training hours, the reading gains obtained are considered high. Even without applying a statistical test (the group is small), one can readily see significant differences between the pre-test and post-test reading grade scores. These gains can be attributed to the increase in vocabulary, growth in and internalization of reading comprehension

skills, and increased speed in word and meaning perception.

*Performance in writing*

Improvement in writing is shown best in the students' creative work, like dialogs, short and long compositions, and stories. These creative activities show evidence of skill acquisition in spelling, grammar, sentence construction, paragraph development, thought organization, vocabulary, and fluency in written communication. For this purpose, therefore, the students were asked to write a composition before they started the training and another at the end of the training. These initial and final compositions were purposely not corrected by the teacher so that the reader can easily distinguish the improvements in terms of fluency of expression, thought organization, structure, and the student's ability to write a much longer composition at the end of the term.

*Performance in listening / speaking*

After a semester's training in the program, the foreign students now manifest marked improvements in their listening and speaking abilities. This is especially shown in the initial and final interviews with the head of the department, and in the initial and final tape recordings of creative oral exercises. The way they interact with their teachers in the different disciplines, with their fellow students, and with friends outside the University campus has changed a great deal. They now understand spoken English better, and they, too, are better understood.

## *Conclusion*

As part of the University-Wide Reading Program, the *Reading-Based Intensive Course in English for Foreign Students* has existed for a few years now. However, it was reorganized and restructured only during the school year 1983-1984 due to the increase of non-English speaking foreign students seeking admission in Centro Escolar University. Now, after one year of using the improved form, the program has attracted the attention of foreign councils of education, especially among Asian nations. The feedback that the students bring to their respective countries is favorable. In view of this, more and more foreign students come to the Philippines to seek admission in the different colleges of Centro Escolar University.

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Chapter VII

# *Cultural Influences on the Grammar of ESL Short Stories and Poems*

Patria G. Arañas

## *Introduction*

Language is a means of communication, understood and accepted by a community of people. It is a "system which mediates, in a highly complex way, between the universe of meaning and the universe of sound" (Chafe, 1970). Peter Farb (1979) holds that language is a system of grammar as well as a system of human behavior which can be analyzed according to theories of interaction and can be moved as a shared system of rules and conventions mutually intelligible to all members of a particular community, yet a system which nevertheless offers freedom and creativity.

Language, as a means of communication uses words which Evans (1978) refers to as "tools for the job of saying what you want to say. And what you want to say are your thoughts and feelings, your desires, your dislikes, your hopes and your fears, your business and your pleasure — almost everything, indeed that makes up *you*."

Hayakawa (1978) maintains that language is the most highly developed, most subtle and most complicated form of symbolism. It changes in form and content according to the purpose it is used. Therefore, there are the language of reports, the language of science, and the language of literature. The language of literary writing does not contain only affective elements but more importantly, it expresses feelings and sentiments. Words, in the form of similes, metaphors, allusions, antitheses, irony, are utilized by literary writers to make readers and listeners feel what life is like in the living.

## *English, Lingua Franca of the World*

English, according to a special report in *Newsweek* (25 Nov., 1982), is spoken by 700 million people and English appears to have become the *lingua franca* of the world. It has become the medium of communication among nations in Europe, in Asia and in countries where different languages are spoken; it has come to be used to unify the country. This

finding supports a study made by Fishman, Cooper and Rosenbaum (1977) from secondary sources covering 102 non-English-mother-tongue countries with respect to English and to economic, educational, demographic variables related to the rise of English as an additional language around the world. The report of *Newsweek* also supports the study made by Broshnahen which isolated variables with respect to the spread of of Arabic, Greek and Latin as mother tongues, namely: military imposition, duration of authority, linguistic diversity, and materials advantages. Fishman, et al. found additional factors, namely: urbanizations, economic development and religious composition. The study found all the factors related to the status of English.

Since English has become one of the languages of the world and since a language is dynamic and living, several varieties have developed and they have become accepted as "nativized" English as long as they are intelligible to most English peoples.

### *Filipino Short Stories and Poems in English*

The Filipinos have been known as an English-speaking people, a bilingual people. Gonzalez terms the Filipino as a multilingual, using a vernacular in his intimate familiar interaction; a *lingua franca* or a regional vernacular (increasingly Tagalog-based Filipino) in his urban communities and in his transactions with other ethnic groups; English in business, industry, academia and for negotiations in international circles and as a language of wider communication.

A Filipino English variety has been in use by more than one half of the population and this is expected to grow to 78.7 percent by the end of the century.

S. N. Sridher considers literature in English of non-English-mother-tongue as non-native English literature. He lists several ways by which non-native writers "nativize" the language to suit their purposes. These are: vocabulary, collocation, idiomaticization, syntax and rhetorical patterning. Innovations, as part of the processes of nativization involve the following:

1. borrowing of words for culturally-bound everyday objects;
2. contextualizing or embedding the item in a passage that makes the meaning of the term self-explanatory;
3. calquing or loan translation by which literal translations are used;
4. infusing of native language syntactic pattern.

Some writers have termed nativized expressions as deviant forms,

Filipinisms or literalisms. This paper aims to analyze cultural influences manifested in Philippine literature in English particularly short stories and poems written by Filipino writers who were awarded first prizes by the Carlos Palanca Memorial Awards in 1965—1970.

*Analysis of "Nativization" in Palanca Award-Winning Short Stories*

The first prize winners in the short story category are the following (Polotan, 1976):

1965-66 *Lover Boy*
by Lilia Pablo Amansec

1966-67 *The fires of the Sun, The Crystalline Sky, The Dark Ocean and Some Women and/or Girls, including Napoleon Espiritu's First Granddaughter* by Gregorio C. Brillantes

1967-68 *All About Me*
by Elsa-Victoria Martinez

1968-69 *Un Bel Di*
by Edith L. Tiempo

1969-70 *People of Consequence*
by Ines Taccas-Cammayo

A. Borrowing of words for culturally-bound objects and contextualizing

Of the short story writers, Brillantes, Tiempo and Cammayo made use of native terms, embedded in passages. Of the three, Brillantes used the most terms as in the following examples.

1. Brillantes—watching them all shaking and stamping to the *combo's* African beat/ —Marisa—has her mother's patrician's features—warmhearted, testing sentimental, an ardent follower of Raul Manglapus, Steve McQueen and Ilya Kurykin—(combo—5-6 man band playing guitars and drums).

— he has not been comfortable of late with Ramon, his older son-in-law, a dour argumentative lawyer who never fails to remind him at every opportunity to take the *cursillo* (cursillo — a religious movement which appeals to emotional reactions for commitment).

— Espiritu settles into a leather arm chair — taking care not to crumple his embroidered *baro*, a gift from his daughters (baro—barong Tagalog, a long sleeved shirt, usually made of silk-like material called jusi).

2. Tiempo

— six casseroles of *Pancit Molo, Shanghai lumpia*, steamed rice cake

— (Pancit Molo, Shanghai lumpia—local dishes of Chinese origin). Estella turned the car and bumped a little way over the thin growth of weeds and *amor seco* nettles.

3. Cammayo

— the German sent him off with a *de hilo cerrada* suit — (de hilo cerrada — linen cloth).

— When it began to yield milk, she gathered it to make into a white curd .... — Not one *frasco* found its way to their table (frasco — earthen pot/jar).

B. Calquing or loan or literal translation

Amansec, Tiempo and Cammayo used calquing extensively. The following passages are examples of calquing.

1. Amansec

— Now, don't run off, girls," he said, *bathing us from head to toe with the light of his cold blue eyes* (hinuhubaran ng tinging).

— I escaped from the room — *gathering about me the limp transparent* clothing of my maidenhood, which the stranger seemed to divine — (nanganganinag na suot).

2. Tiempo

— The sunlight of three o'clock *washed the* lawn with a *fitful shower of light* that was *clear one moment* and *spottily shady the next* (naligo sa araw. Liliwanag, kukulimlim).

— Two grimy chins in a *ventilated state of attire* from the *edge of the valley basin* and made for one of the cottages nearly (butas-butas na kamiseta; galing sa hulo).

3. Cammayo

— People of consequence (may sinasabi).

— She was so *undemanding*, she never had to *sell at a loss or to mortgage his catch* and the harddealing middleman who came with tempting offers bypassed their house with great alcofness (Hindi dumaraing, hindi nangungulugi, hindi nagsasanla ng huli kaya hindi pansin ng mga ahente).

C. Infusing of native language syntactic pattern

All the five writers utilized non-native syntactic patterns which use: combinations of adverbs and adjectives with participial phrases using the *ed* form of the verbs; modifiers in various positions, repetitions; wordiness; stringy sentences; parenthetical expressions and utterances following the Filipino: "dyan lang; sandali lang; basta; siya yon."

1. Amansec

— You wouldn't drown in Hongkong, water is preciously scarce in that area. Besides, *over there* you could pass for a woman from Shanghai — ah; the phrase *evokes countless memories.*

2. Brillantes

— sideburned crew in red jackets

— pedestaled plants

3. Martinez

— I take my dark glasses off.

— Sometimes there would be no poetry for a while but Joan would always be there and after sometime there would be a new voice and the old lament.

4. Tiempo

— It gave her the *much-needed suggestion* of fragility.

— Quite a few of them were restive; they whispered naughtily and moved their languid fans about their *luscious pancaked faces.*

5. Cammayo

— The German who was a bachelor had often told Camus that his punishments were for his own good because he must learn to shed his indolent and clumsy ways, if he ever hoped to amount to anything.

*Cultural influences*

The Palanca Award winning short stories from 1965 to 1970 express not only the nativized variety of English but also cultural biases and practices.

Amansec writes of a foreigner who talks about sex exploits of an embalmer. She gives detailed descriptions of the actions of the embalmer. Aside from using an unconventional topic, she situates the actions in Hongkong considered as a shopper's Paradise.

Brillantes recounts the life of a newsman who scales the ladder of success and becomes a Vice-President of a Mass Media corporation and shows all the evidence of success such as: a Mercedes Bens car and a small one, married daughters, teenaged daughter, a daughter by another woman, prostitutes including a foreign one and a propensity for young girls. He, of all of these writers, made extensive use of long sentences.

Martinez expresses the wish of many young girls to go abroad to study and be independent. She also voices the pain experienced by those whose parents are separated.

Tiempo and Cammayo both show the Spanish influence of wearing culture so as to impress others even if it would mean cheating, malversation of funds and living a miserable life. Filipino customs like chewing betel nuts, rolling sleeping mats and standing them in a corner of the house, suggesting instead of directly requesting or asking, calling a medicine woman instead of a physician, bringing guests home even if it is inconvenient, have been included in the stories.

*Analysis of Palanca Awards First Prize Winning Poems*

The first prize winning poems and their authors are the following:

1965-66 *Angels and Fugitives*
by Emmanuel S. Torres

1966-67 *The Tracks of Babylon and other poems*
by Edith L. Tiempo

1967-68 *The Quaver and the Fear*
by Godofredo Burce Bunao

1968-69 *Counterclockwise and Dark Sutra*
by Federico Licsi Espino, Jr.

1969-70 *Selected Poems*
by Hilario S. Francia

A. Borrowing of words for culturally-bound objects. Torres, Tiempo and Espino made use of native terms (some nativized) as in the following examples.

1. Torres

"Coming through One Dark Night"

My worktable's helter-shelter
*Manila folders*, books, blue books to work.

I'll never manage going through each one,
I know that, as I reach out
for my small *molave* saint paper weight.

2. Tiempo

"The Pastle"

... the bamboo split and out stepped *Malakas* (strong) and *Maganda* (beautiful), the first man and woman.

"Cracked Shell"

She heard the whistling and the footfalls

In the backyard garden, and would have thought him back
But for the iron *clack-clack* of his hoe.

3. Espino

"The Midget"

The face is lunar with gnomic, gnomish lips
Which syllable what the dwarfish eyes can see
Abey of *Lam-ang* lined upon the wales
Of memory; and yet his heroism fathers guilt
Only a *guru* or a grayboard could condome:

Loud libido
*L'espouse encor nierge*

Espino, a prolific tri-lingual writer of poems and short stories and winner of several major prizes, used "borrowed" words from French, German and Latin; Torres and Tiempo used a minimum of borrowed words.

B. Contextualizing or embedding an item in a passage to make the meaning of the term self-explanatory.

The examples for this method do not utilize Filipino words but English terms that have Filipino connotation like "save" and "It" used in games and "schmalty," a Yiddish word. Torres and Espino used this method sparingly.

1. Torres

"To a Friend who Failed to Keep an Appointment"

Hide-and-seek where all the players conspire
To lose interest in any desire
To be found or "saved' having discovered

While looking for suitable shade
A wilderness of distractions to wonder in
With absurder beasts and games. "It"

2. Espino, Jr.

"Housewife Watching a Soap Opera"

The suds of new detergent operas
Like smoke of *schmalty*, sting her gaze
In between persuasive tricks of trade.

C. Calquing or loan translation

All five authors made extensive use of this method as in the excerpts

cited below. Terms used by Torres like knocker, time-eaten house, backlot, double shapes, wived, scissored wings, windshaken, are translations for "pangkatok, nilipasan ng panahon, likod-bahay, nagdadalang-tao, nag-asawa, putput na pakpak, himpapawid." "Tables of separation" is a negative version of the Filipino expression - "dulang pagsaama."

"Speech losing salt" refers to respectful speech, using "po" and "opo". So when a child forgets to say "po" the older usually reprimands him with, "Wala kang asin."

"Feet of mud" is a nativized "feet of clay." Wash stick is for "palu-palo."

Tiempo's reaped fields, fixed commotion, cupped hands are distinctly Filipino English terms for "Umani ang lupa, dating maçulo, malukong."

Other calqued phrases are: squatly house, wormslithered, funny shirt, deflated sack, circled files, puttingaway.

Bunao presents *skin of the earth*, a literal translation of "balat ng lupa," *blindfolded* moon is derived from "takipsilim." *Alcohol romance*, *foreheads* of buildings, *eyes* of shops are examples of personification attributable to Filipino's indirect speech.

The authors utilized noun phrases with adjectives and participles and literal translations of Filipino expressions.

1. Torres

"There Stands a Door"

Propped by the pavement's rubble, unhinged
The door with the beautiful worn *knocker*
From the *time-eaten house* hammered apart
Unhinges me now in my silent walk.

Belief in the morning
Trees drink the dew, greeding in the stillness
Which sustains the *colored simplicities of butterflies.*

Smoke is a *wreath that lightens* as her breath does
Spreading to the room's four corners, and the morning's as well.

2. Tiempo

"The Pestle"

...in the beginning *the sky hung low over the earth*...and the *woman took off her beads* and her *crescent comb* and hooked *them up on the sky*, the more freely to work, as her pestle struck the blue arch again and again, it began to rise, rise. . .

On the bank the *wash-stick* is beating out time,
Time and wise words and riddles in a wooden rime,

"Lament for the Littlest Fellow"
sometimes in your *sleeping face* upon the pillow
I would catch our own little truant unaware,

3. Bunao

"Bumble Bee"
Are we not doomed to sit
Our turn out by the *tall, tall sermon*
Dwarfed by the *tall, tall sermon*
On the *skin of the earth?*

"Night fall"
The dark is dumped on the adjacent garden
And the moon is a *blindfolded* moon
With arms that grope among the fences.

"Dissonance"
Astounded by the dissonance
That moves the careless feet
Under an *alcohol romance.*

4. *Espino*

"Somnambulistic Ballad: An Excerpt"
Green, green, *you fascinate me so.*

With shadow on her waist, *so lithe, so slim*
Upon her balcony she dreams, she dreams.

But who will come? and from where? From where
She waits and waits and breathes the cool night air.

"Nuances of Solitude"
It is another nuance of this mood
Which *wives* a woman to a makeshift wharf;
A habit of waiting for her huling half
Miles away from quays of reverie.

"Portrait D'une Femme Enceinte"
Grace stirs in her *soap-white hands*
Trace familiar contents of maternity,
The madonna in every woman who conceives.

D. Infusing of non-native syntactic pattern. The following examples

show non-native syntactic patterns.

— There are the Afternoons . . . .
  Those are the doubtful comforts . . . .
  There are shadows of me . . . .

— . . . which means little to me
  . . . where daily his breaths wheeze . . . .
  . . . when we started to school.

— She brings with her a fan . . . .
  . . . hides her face behind it much.

Other examples of non-native syntactic patterns are as follows.

1. Torres

"There Stands a Door"
*There are the hours whose radiance*
My steps shall not go through again.
*There are the afternoons and beginnings*
Promised by an iron knocker's severed hard.

2. Tiempo

"The Fisherman"
*Man now*, he seized a fish and pulled
Its scales alive and flung it in again;
The naked creature hit the reefs and reeled
The water swirled — he jeered to see the little stain
He stalked again, he flung the net into a school,
Drew in the catch, cursed each thrash and pull.

"Five Homes—The Mason"
Down in the pit, his sanctum, the mason's eyes
Lift to the quarry wall as he taps at the wedge.
But fashioning his schemes, picking at the stone
Gouging truth's niches into the echoing walls
He sees something long since carved: his *house of bone*
*Where daily his breaths wheeze in the dust choked halls.*

3. Bunao

"Boy and Beetle"
*The bettle it was*
*That stopped him:*

*"A Quartette of Quatrains"*
I held you in my eyes *the time I went,*

4. Espino

"Housewife Watching a Soap Opera"
But in the theater of a shabby house,
The screen, unpanoramic, mirrors her,
*Tear for tear, sob for sob, and sud for sud.*

5. Francia

"Our Maytime Queen"
She was our maytime Queen
Who never was. *Or if she was*
*Certainly is forgotten* now.
Although maytime is unforgettable;
and recurs with every summer -
as if wanting to dream itself; . . . .

"Revelers at Andalucia (1964)"
But *what a picture* she
would present to them
Tomorrow:
her face white —
Washed and without
her usual eyes.

The Palanca Awards first-prize-winning poems in 1965—1970 manifest the following characteristics.

— They contain native words of places and some foreign words.

— They utilize embedding of nativized terms.

— They make extensive use of calquing and maintain the English language throughout the poems. Through calquing, native expressions are assigned literal translations which, undoubtedly, cannot express the truly Filipino sentiments.

— They also contain native syntactic patterns.

*Cultural influences*

The Palanca Award winning poems of 1965 to 1970 show not only nativization of the English grammar to make the literary pieces intelligible to Filipino readers but also cultural biases through the topics chosen for the poems.

Torres shows partiality for common household scenes like the door, a woman by the window, a pregnant woman, a parrot, paintings on walls, times of the day and the year, photographs, and common experiences here and abroad.

Tiempo deals with experiences of people with various jobs like the fisherman, the farmer, the hunter, the city man. She also expresses various feelings represented by objects that we take for granted like the pestle, cracked shell, pane, broken line. She also made use of legends like that of the sky.

Both Torres and Tiempo use sentences of ordinary length.

Bunao writes about insects and things of nature like a moth, a bumble bee, sheep, beetle, daisies, brick, quarter moon. He also expresses ideas about change, dissonance, tears, humiliation, first love, concert and church matters. Unexpectedly, Bunao writes delicately about love scenes which could be understood only by those who have experienced it.

Espino presents sophisticated experiences of a well-traveled native and "name drops" while he uses native textbook characters like Pepe and Pilar. He writes about local places, like Pasig, Calatagan, University of Santo Tomas.

Francia writes about Maytime experiences in a style different from the other writers.

### *Conclusion*

The Palanca Award winning short stories and poems in 1965—1970 all manifest a Philippine variety of English which utilize native words for objects, places and names of persons; calquing and infusing of native language syntax structures. The English short stories and poems express Filipino culture and aspirations which have been understood and accepted by the Filipino readers and students. The writers, although proficient users of the English language, adopted a type of English that would be not only intelligible but more importantly acceptable to the Filipino audience. The issues raised are the following.

1. Is the non-native variety of English such as the one used in Filipino short stories and poems which were awarded first prizes by the Palanca Memorial Awards intelligible to Filipino readers?

Since the short stories and poems won first prize awards, also that some of them are included among the materials for study of secondary and tertiary schools, it would appear that the short stories and poems are understood by Filipino readers.

2. Is the non-native variety of English such as the one used in the Filipino short stories and poems awarded first prizes by the Palanca Memorial Award accepted as expressive of Filipino culture?

Although translations and infusing of native syntactic structures made some expressions and sentences forced and belabored, the Filipino spirit and thought were adequately expressed.

3. Is this the type of Filipino English that should be taught in schools?

It is certain that these stories are used in reading and literature classes, mostly on the secondary and tertiary levels. Whether this model of English should be the model taught in school is still not resolved. In the face of the present trends for communicative competence, the variety of English used in the Palanca Award-winning short stories and poems may not answer the present needs. However, the variety that should be taught should be correct, adequate and suitable to the needs of the educated Filipino.

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Chapter VIII

# *A Comparison of Study Skill Attitudes of Asian and American Students*

CARMEN J. CARSELLO*

## *Introduction*

In the *U. S. News and World Report* dated 2 April 1984 in an article titled "Asian-Americans: Are They Making the Grade," it is stated that "there are few groups as determined to get ahead as those whose roots are in the Pacific and Far East." Experts in this article trace the push to succeed academically to culture, social background, and especially family pressures. These parents seem to indirectly communicate that students are expected to work hard, study, and succeed.

Scores of Asians on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) indicate that they consistently score higher in mathematics than any other ethnic group. They also excell in science. In the Westinghouse Science Talent Search of 1000 entrants, they won six out of 10 top awards. However, they generally get lower scores in the SAT verbal skills. This may account for the preference to the fields of engineering, math, and science rather than politics and related fields which require proficiency in verbal skills.

Regarding their ability to concentrate on studies, Nathan Caplan, psychologist at the University of Michigan says"...when Asians concentrate, nothing else goes on in their minds..." in contrast to U. S. students who have much subvocal speech, force an idea along, and stumble over their thoughts.

Since so much has been said about Asians and their success in American schools, the present research was conducted to determine whether the writers could find a difference in study skills, attitudes and methods between Asian and American students in an American university.

*James W. Creaser and Carmen J. Carsello wrote this paper, and Carsello presented it orally at the pre-congress institute on "Reading English in Asia," IRA World Congress on Reading in Hong Kong, 1984.

## *Method*

### *Instruments: the study skills test*

The test that was used to compare Asian and American students was a 90-item inventory developed at the University of Illinois at Chicago. By means of factor analysis, fifteen items in each of six areas were picked out of an original pool of almost three hundred items. The areas were: 1) Motivation Regarding School, 2) Textbook Usage and Reading, 3) Exam-preparation and Taking Examinations, 4) Classroom Skills an Behavior, 4) Use of Time for Studying, and 6) Concentration on School Work.

### *Subjects*

A list of Asian students who had entered the University of Illinois at Chicago in the last three years was obtained from the Office of Foreign Student Affairs. From this list, those Asian students who had taken the Study Skills Test (N = 43) were included in the study.

For comparison, a large sample of American students (N = 1000) who had taken the test were selected. It was determined that the American group had approximately the same proportion of males and females as did the Asian group. They were not compared on any other demographic factors.

### *Comparison*

The Asians and American students were compared on scores for each area and for the total score on the test. These scores were obtained by keying what was considered to be the best answer to each item as judged by the study skills instructors. The two groups were also compared on each of the 90 items separately.

## *Results*

When the scores are compared in each of the six areas we find only one area with a significant difference—and that is the one called "Classroom Skills and Behavior." It shows a mean difference of 1.36 points in favor of the American group (see Table 1).

Table 2 lists the items that differ significantly with the "Classroom Skills and Behavior" area questions.

Table 3 lists items that did not differ significantly in "Classroom Skills and Behavior" area.

Table 1: Results of Inventory of Academic Skills & Attitudes

| Sub-Tests | Asians (N=42) M | S.D. | U.S. Control (N=1000) M | S.D. | Mean Diff. (Asians-U.S.) | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Motivation | 8.86 | 2.63 | 8.93 | 3.00 | − .07 | Not Sig |
| Reading | 9.71 | 2.23 | 9.69 | 2.71 | + .02 | Not Sig |
| Exams | 9.69 | 1.99 | 9.91 | 2.52 | − .22 | Not Sig |
| Classroom | 8.93 | 3.34 | 10.29 | 2.80 | −1.36 | Sig at .01 level |
| Time | 8.36 | 2.79 | 8.20 | 3.72 | + .16 | Not Sig |
| Concentration | 8.10 | 3.59 | 8.09 | 4.19 | + .01 | Not Sig |
| Total | 53.64 | 10.64 | 55.10 | 14.58 | −1.46 | Not Sig |

Table 2: Items that differ significantly in the "Classroom Skills and Behavior" area

| Item # | Item | Best Answer | Best Group |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | I take very poor notes. | F | U.S. |
| 34 | I often miss important lecture information because I am busy making notes on earlier material. | F | U.S. |
| 54 | I am uaually well prepared when I go to class. | T | U.S. |
| 68 | I revise my notes after a lecture. | T | A |
| 79 | I participate more than most students in class discussion. | T | U.S. |

Table 3: Items that did not differ significantly in the "Classroom Skills and Behavior" area

| Item # | Item | Best Ans. |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | I hesitate to talk to the instructor even when I don't understand something. | T |
| 8 | I often come to class without any assignment prepared. | F |
| 18 | With lecture notes, I leave a space if I miss a point and get the idea later. | T |
| 21 | My class notes are usually disorganized, even if the lecture was well organized by the teacher. | F |
| 23 | When taking notes on a lecture, I have trouble picking out the main points. | F |
| 44 | I usually review the previous lecture notes before going to class. | T |
| 49 | Before I go to class, I try ro test myself to be sure I know the material. | T |
| 74 | My class notes are difficult to understand later. | F |
| 81 | I prefer to sit in the back of the classroom. | F |
| 84 | I keep all the notes for each subject together, carefully arranging them in logical order. | T |

Table 4: Items with better significant scores by Asians

| Item # | Item | Best Ans. | Rank Order |
|---|---|---|---|
| 87 | I build up my knowledge of the meaning of words by extensive reading. | T | 1 |
| 65 | I study three or more hours a day outside of class. | T | 2 |
| 45 | I have a tendency to put outside activities ahead of studying. | F | 3 |
| 28 | I always put studying first. | T | 6 |

| Item # | Item | Best Ans. | Rank Order |
|---|---|---|---|
| 38 | When reading a long assignment, I stop periodically and mentally review the main facts and theories that have been presented. | T | 9 |
| 68 | I revise my notes after a lecture. | T | 10 |
| 29 | I wait until the last few nights to study for an exam. | F | 11 |
| 39 | I get restless or tense when I study. | F | 13 |
| 66 | I review regularly throughout the term. | T | 14 |
| 89 | I spend too much time in leisure and recreation and neglect my studies. | F | 16 |
| 64 | I often do more than the required reading in a course. | T | 17 |
| 9 | I tend to daydream when I study. | F | 18 |

Table 5: Items with better significant scores by Americans

| Item # | Item | Best Ans. | Rank Order |
|---|---|---|---|
| 83 | I get nervous and confused when taking an examination and fail to answer questions to the best of my ability. | F | 4 |
| 31 | I think my studies suffer because I am a poor reader. | F | 5 |
| 88 | I have to be in the right mood to study well. | F | 7 |
| 54 | I am usually well-prepared when I go to class. | T | 8 |
| 12 | I take very poor notes. | F | 12 |
| 82 | I attend college to satisfy my parents. | F | 15 |
| 17 | On math and science exams I put down all my calculations so I may get at least partial credit for using the right method. | T | 19 |

| Item # | Item | Best Ans. | Rank Order |
|---|---|---|---|
| 63 | I skip classes that I could just as easily attend. | F | 20 |
| 67 | I have difficulty in picking out the important points of a reading assignment--points that are later asked on examination. | F | 21 |
| 77 | I always go over examinations after they are returned to make sure I understand why I made errors. | T | 22 |
| 79 | I participate more than most students in class discussions. | T | 23 |
| 34 | I often miss important lecture information because I am busy making notes. | F | 24 |
| 50 | I get so upset about little things that I can't study. | F | 25 |

When the students were compared on each of the 90 items separately, twenty-five items showed a significant difference. Of these, the Asians scored better in twelve cases (see Table 4) and the Americans scored better in thirteen cases (see Table 5).

### *Discussion*

The results of this research appear to indicate that there is only a small difference in the study skills attitudes of Asian foreign students and American students when their answers to the 90-question study skills survey are compared. When the scores for each area were compared, the Americans scored significantly better in only one area of fifteen questions titled, "Classroom Skills and Behavior." In this area it was found that only four questions were scored better by the American students and these had to do with taking notes, class preparation and class discussion. The one question on which the Asians scored better pertained to revising classroom notes. It seems that they are more thorough in this respect.

When the two groups were compared on scores in each of the 90 questions it was found that the answeres to twenty-five questions showed a significant difference. Of these twenty-five questions the Asians scored bet-

ter on twelve and the Americans on thirteen. The questions in which the Asians scored higher seem to indicate that Asian students are generally more industrious and willing to work longer and harder in school work. They choose to give study priority over other activities and devote much effort toward success in school. However, they lack confidence in their verbal and reading skills, and they hesitate to participate in class discussion—possibly because of fear of failure. They are not confident of pronunciation and are very concerned about saving face. These points seem to corroborate the statements made in the introduction of this paper.

The Americans appear to have more self-confidence. They participate in class discussion and they do not get nervous or confused on examinations. They are more proficient in verbal skills and in reading. However, they don't seem to be able to concentrate as completely on the subject at hand.

We may conclude this discussion by noting the limitations and bias of this study. We must consider the following: 1) We are dealing with a select few Asian foreign students, and, therefore, it is difficult to generalize or assume that a larger sample of students in their home country would have the same responses: 2) We must wonder, had the study been done in an Asian country with American students, if the results would be the same: and 3) We must consider that the research instrument may not be ideal for Asian foreign students who have some difficulty with reading skills.

# BYLAWS

# LITERACY AND LANGUAGES IN ASIA

## I. PURPOSE

Literacy and Languages in Asia (LLA) members shall systematically communicate within IRA for academic/professional purposes that are relevant to the IRA purposes designated in IRA Bylaws and that are relevant to the following areas.

*Languages:* (1) English as an international language (EIL);
(2) other second/foreign languages (L2);
(3) native languages in relation to EIL or other L2.
*Aspects:* (4) reading and writing, including literature, in (1)-(3);
(5) spoken language in (1)-(3) in relation to reading;
(6) linguistics, pure or applied, in (1)-(3).
*Approaches:* (7) theory-oriented research studies;
(8) research/development of instructional methods;
(9) research/development of teaching materials and teacher education.

## II. ACTIVITIES

(1) To realize the purposes, LLA members shall be encouraged to write articles relevant to the LLA interest areas designated above, and these articles, when officially accepted, shall be reprinted at the LLA office for their distribution among members.
(2) Group presentations on specified theme(s) shall be organized for IRA World Congresses, IRA Annual Conventions, Asian conferences, and other IRA or non-IRA international meetings.
(3) Joint research projects shall be organized and conducted internationally.
(4) LLA newsletters and other publications shall be planned.
(5) Other activities may be identified.

## III. MEMBERSHIP

LLA membership shall be open to all IRA members, or non-IRA members who are expected to join IRA because of their interests in furthering the purposes of IRA and LLA.

Dues for active membership shall begin to be collected in October, 1983. Active members shall receive all LLA reprints and publications free. Non-active members who sign the agreement to be an LLA member but do not pay dues shall receive only newsletters free. Dues shall be set or changed by Representatives.

## IV. REPRESENTATIVES

Two-year-term LLA Representatives shall be elected by active members.

LLA Representatives shall have the equivalent functions of IRA Board of Directors and Delegates Assembly designated in IRA Bylaws. Each country that has more than three and fewer than ten active members on the official membership record shall have one two-year-term Representative. A country that has more than ten active members shall have one two-year-term Representatives.

The number of current active members in each country as of May 30 shall be accepted as the official record of LLA membership of the year.

When the Representative office of a country expires, LLA Coordinator (see V) shall send letters in the first week of June to LLA active members in that country to elect the new Representative(s). All active members, including the ex-Representative(s), shall be listed on the voting sheet so that members can check one of them for their Representative. The one (or two) who wins the largest number of checks in the returned voting sheets before the end of the second week of July shall become the new Representative(s).

Representatives shall read members' articles to decide whether to accept them officially or not. Officially accepted articles shall be reprinted or published for distribution among LLA active members.

When at least two Representatives recommend acceptance of an article, and no Representative definitely opposes its acceptance, the article is to be officially accepted.

## V. OFFICERS

In the English alphabetical order of single-word country names, beginning with the name of the country that has the largest number of founding members, each Representative shall serve as one-year-term LLA Vice-president, by turn. At the expiration of the term as Vice-president, the Vice-president shall then automatically succeed to the office of President for one year. When a country has two Representatives, the one whose family name in English precedes the other's in the alphabetical order, shall serve as LLA Vice-president. One member shall not serve as Vice-president more than one term. If the current Representative of a country is an ex-President, and if that country has only one Representative, then another Representative shall be elected according to LLA bylaws, who shall serve as new LLA Vice-president, in addition to the current Representative and ex-President from that country.

A three-year-term Coordinator shall be elected by Representatives every three years from among LLA active members who are not Representatives. The Coordinator shall assume the equivalent functions of the IRA Executive Director designated in IRA Bylaws, in addition to the responsibilities relevant to LLA article reprints, newsletters, other publications, mailing, and organization of joint projects, presentations, and conferences.

For the election of a new Coordinator, in the first week of May, before the current Coordinator's term expires in August, the LLA President shall request by mail that each Representative should recommend one person for the new Coordinator; then, the President shall send by mail a list of the recommended names to the Representatives so that they shall check one person for the new Coordinator. The one who is checked by the largest number of the second week of July shall serve as the next Coordinator, beginning to work in the second week of August. If the elected person does not agree to serve as the Coordinator, the one who won the largest votes next to the person shall serve as the Coordinator.

## VI. QUORUM

A majority of returned mail or an LLA meeting shall constitute a quorum, unless a quorum is specified for a case.

A proposal may be adopted officially by a majority of affirmative votes of the quorum, unless other regulations are specified.

Any procedures not specified in the LLA bylaws shall be carried out according to IRA Bylaws, unless LLA Representatives adopt a particular regulation or its equivalent proposition.

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